



DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Marc R. Yamada
Chief of Police

February 18, 2025

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
101 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 805, *Criminal Law- Mail and Package Theft*

Dear Chair Clippinger,

The Montgomery County Department of Police is pleased to support House Bill 805, *Criminal Law- Mail and Package Theft*. We particularly appreciate the emphasis on the unlawful use of the United States Postal Service (USPS) "arrow key" which is an official master key used to access public mailboxes.

Arrow key thefts have allowed criminals to easily open USPS mailboxes and steal letters and parcels from within. In some cases, thieves have obtained sensitive bank and credit card information that has led to bank fraud and identity theft which can be particularly challenging to vulnerable older populations. Investigators have discovered that stolen arrow keys have been sold for a significant profit and have become a highly sought-after commodity among criminal entities.

The Montgomery County Department of Police endorses this legislation because of its public safety benefits. Last year, Montgomery County experienced multiple well-publicized incidents of mailbox thefts, and of USPS letter carriers being robbed of government property. One carrier was violently robbed of his keys. This is happening around the State as well as the country. According to the Government Accountability Office, the mention of arrow keys in USPS robberies increased from 13 incidents in 2017 to 320 incidents in 2023.

While these offenses have traditionally been federal violations, this legislation would enable Maryland law enforcement to charge offenders at the local level without requiring the assistance of USPS partners. From the perspective of our Maryland victims, mail carriers, and identity theft victims, this option would enhance public safety by allowing local law enforcement to more rapidly respond to mail theft crimes against our residents.

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For these reasons, the Montgomery Department of Police supports House Bill 805 and urges the Committee to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

Chief Marc R. Yamada

cc: Members of the Judiciary Committee

Office of the Chief of Police

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