



## Maryland State's Attorneys' Association

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**DATE:**                   **January 17, 2025**

**BILL NUMBER:**    **HB 269**

**POSITION:**         **Favorable**

The Maryland State's Attorneys' Association (MSAA) supports House Bill 269 and urges this Committee to issue a favorable report.

Maryland classifies theft offenses as misdemeanors or felonies based on the value of the property stolen – if the value is less than \$1,500, the offense is a misdemeanor, while if the value is \$1,500 or more, it is a felony. Although prosecution for most misdemeanor offenses must begin within one year from the date the offense was committed,<sup>1</sup> misdemeanor theft offenses enjoy a slightly longer statute of limitations: theft prosecutions must begin within two years from the date the offense occurred.<sup>2</sup>

HB 269 increases this period from two years to three years for theft of property having a value of less than \$100. Together with HB 109, which provides a similar increase in the statute of limitations for theft of property having a value of at least \$100 but less than \$1,500, HB 269 will allow for more comprehensive investigations and a greater opportunity to bring the responsible party to justice. Extending the statute of limitations enhances the ability of Maryland's prosecutors to seek justice for victims, hold offenders accountable, and protect the safety of the community by ensuring those who commit misdemeanor theft offenses are prosecuted fairly.

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<sup>1</sup> MD. CODE ANN., CTS. & JUD. PROC. § 5-106(a).

<sup>2</sup> MD. CODE ANN., CRIM. LAW § 7-104(i).