

**Testimony for House Judiciary Committee**  
**Tuesday, February 25, 2025**  
**HB0836 – County Police Accountability Boards – Investigation of Complaints of**  
**Police Misconduct**  
**FAVORABLE**

Dear Honorable Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Bartlett, and committee members:

My name is Beverly John. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Talking Drum Incorporated, a Maryland non-profit with a mission to help eradicate systems of oppression, focusing on police, prosecutorial and judicial accountability. As a member of the Maryland Coalition for Justice and Police Accountability and the Prince George's County Coalition for Police Accountability we support HB836 to give all county boards investigatory and subpoena powers. Additionally, we would like to thank the Prince George's County Council for their support of the legislation.

This legislation, if passed, would provide a critical missing piece that is needed to give our local police accountability boards (PABs) the power to fully investigate misconduct complaints. Without the ability to independently investigate complaints, we are once again relying on law enforcement internal affairs as the primary body investigating the complaints. We know that without independent review and investigation, cases of misconduct will go unaddressed.

We are still concerned about the ability to timely address cases when there is a delay in getting the case from internal affairs. These delays, whether intentional or not, would deny our citizens a fair review of their complaints and circumvents the intent of HB670.

Additionally, there are concerns about the very low number of complaints being reviewed by our PAB (i.e., less than 200 in 2023 and 2024) where the dissolved Citizen's Complaint Oversight Panel reviewed 1,000+ for years until it was dissolved in 2022.

Therefore, we urge a "Favorable with amendments" vote on HB533.

Thank you.