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**HB0985**

February 25, 2025

**TO:** Members of the House Judiciary Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 985 – Police Discipline - Administrative Charging Committees - Additional Charging Committee

**POSITION: Support**

Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) supports House Bill (HB) 985 - Police Discipline - Administrative Charging Committees - Additional Charging Committee.

According to Article – Public Safety, §3–104(a)(1) of the Annotated Code of Maryland, each county shall only have *one* Administrative Charging Committee (ACC). HB 985 authorizes local governing bodies, by local law, to establish a second ACC within their police accountability apparatus. ACCs are required by law to review investigations of police misconduct; the purpose of this bill is to grant counties and Baltimore City the ability to create an equal and autonomous “B-Team” ACC if the first ACC struggles to manage the number of investigations it is tasked with reviewing. For instance, the Baltimore City ACC reviews numerous investigations on a weekly basis, sometimes in excess of its routine workload. This is because Baltimore City is a populous city with many law enforcement agencies and officers. Therefore, one administrative charging body of five individuals may be sufficient for some small jurisdictions, while being insufficient for other larger ones. This legislation would, in theory, expand ACCs’ ability to thoroughly and carefully review all cases referred to the committee every week.

This legislation is enabling in nature, allowing for each jurisdiction to determine if a second ACC is appropriate to service their countywide law enforcement agencies based on their specific circumstances. **HB 895 does not require each county establish a second ACC should they not need one.** It would, however, strengthen the transparency in policing created Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 (Anton’s Law) in instances in which counties are struggling keep up with the case load.

For the above stated reasons, the BCA respectfully request a favorable report on HB 985.