

Dear **Member of the House Judiciary Committee,**

This testimony is being submitted alongside my friends in Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. I am also submitting this testimony in collaboration with the Campaign for Justice, Safety, and Jobs (CJSJ). I am a resident of **District 46**, a community association board member and antiracism chair, and workforce development professional. I am dedicated to a safe and prosperous Baltimore with a police department accountable to the public that the public can trust. **I am testifying in support of HB0139.**

Under the police accountability reforms set up in 2021, Administrative Charging Committees (ACC) must review completed investigations and render a decision before the one year and one day deadline. While the statute gives the ACC 30 days to complete their review after the law enforcement agency has handed over their investigative file, there is no deadline for the agency in question to do so. This often leads to agencies turning over their files to the ACC "at the last minute," leaving the ACC little time to work. To ensure the ACC has sufficient time to review completed investigations, **HB0139I** would require the law enforcement agency to complete their investigations within 9 months. I also support an amendment which would lift the cap of 30 days on the ACC review, so that the ACC would have until the end of the one year and one day period to complete a thorough review.

Giving the Administrative Charging Committee sufficient time to review completed investigations is a wise change to the law for all parties. Hasty reviews completed more to a deadline than to the purpose for which the ACC is convened can only serve to make errors, misapprehensions, and miscarriages of justice easier. A longer duration for the Internal Affairs Department investigation can serve to drag out the impact of an investigation and the subsequent review on the life of the officer or officers being investigated and their colleagues. It behooves all involved to complete reviews in a timely fashion, including completed Administrative Charging Committee reviews, so that our law enforcement officers can refocus their attention on protecting and serving their communities. If an officer or officers ought to be charged or if disciplinary actions ought to be undertaken, such findings can be shared swiftly and problems rooted out more efficiently. Striking a better balance for speed and completeness will ensure reform achieves its aim: improving policing for residents.

It is for this reason that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of HB0139 Misconduct Investigation Deadline, with amendments.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
John Preston Ford
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