



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Unit
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: February 25, 2025

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 1361

POSITION: Oppose

BILL TITLE: Public Safety – Law Enforcement Agencies – Standardized Report Writing System (Maryland Statewide Law Enforcement Report Writing Standardization Act)

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation seeks to require the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to create a standardized report writing system for all law enforcement agencies in the state. The report writing system shall meet the operational needs of each law enforcement agency and follow the Maryland Automated Accident Reporting System as a model. The system shall allow members of the public to access the system and download reports.

In accordance with FBI guidelines, each law enforcement agency in Maryland is required to adopt a Report Management System (RMS) capable of capturing crime data and sending that data to the Maryland State Police (MSP). The MSP compiles the data and forwards the data to the FBI. This new requirement is part of the FBI National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) crime data collection program, similar to the Uniform Crime Report. Each agency purchased its own system to meet the needs of the local jurisdiction and has worked to obtain FBI certification. FBI certification has taken years to receive and all but two agencies are in compliance.

Under the FBI NIBRS program every law enforcement agency in the country is expected to comply with the reporting mandates. In Maryland, police agencies report their crime data to one central agency; the MSP. Each jurisdiction that purchased an RMS compliant system, procured it based on the needs of the county or municipality. In some cases, the RMS is shared with other local non law enforcement agencies, such as the fire department. Neither the FBI or the MSP dictated what system had to be purchased, or how every report should be written, as every jurisdiction has their own needs and mandates. There are currently 128 law enforcement agencies reporting to the NIBRS system. Some larger law enforcement agencies share the RMS with the smaller municipal agencies.

Each RMS cost several million dollars to build. Each took years to receive the FBI certification. MSP's system, which is used by several state agencies, cost over \$30 million to build. State wide, tens of millions of dollars were spent building these systems. HB 1361 requires everyone of them to be shuttered for law enforcement use within 18 months of the new statewide system being built.

State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Section
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

House Bill 1361 creates a major fiscal and operational impact to the state. The building of a single system for over 150 police agencies to meet their independent needs will take years and millions of dollars. To get the system certified by the FBI will take even longer.

While the bill requires the Commission to build a single system for report writing, it does not address the hardware, software and access licensing fees necessary for officers to access the system. The bill implies that law enforcement agencies will be on the hook for some of the costs as it states that law enforcement agencies may seek additional funding through federal grants or partnerships. Additionally, the bill states that the system shall allow for interoperability. If the system is being built for all of law enforcement and mandated to be used by law enforcement, interoperability should be implied. This being, after they have been directed by law to scrap their million-dollar systems.

House Bill 1361 is an unfunded mandate that seeks to enhance collaboration and exchange of information between law enforcement agencies. Today, law enforcement uses LINX for criminal investigation data sharing and the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, of which local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies are partners and share information on crimes, fugitives, and crime trends from other states and in Maryland.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of State Police urges the Committee to give House Bill 1361 an unfavorable report.