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MAYOR

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HB0122

February 25, 2025

TO: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

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

RE: House Bill 122 – Public Safety - Police Accountability - Police Officer Complainant

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) 122 - Public Safety - Police Accountability - Police Officer Complainant.

HB 122 authorizes local Police Accountability Boards (PAB) to intake complaints of police misconduct from fellow police officers. This would offer an alternative channel for law enforcement officers (LEO) to submit complaints of misconduct among their peers as opposed to the traditional avenue of an internal investigatory unit or internal affairs.

Providing an alternative avenue for LEOs to report misconduct could be advantageous or preferable in certain instances. These include instances of mismanagement, a waste of government resources, a danger to public health or safety, or a violation of law or policy committed by another police officer. However, the BCA acknowledges the primary intent of the bill is to allow LEOs to submit complaints with PABs in cases of sexual misconduct to prevent such cases from being obfuscated. For any reason, if a LEO believes that their complaint of misconduct with an internal investigatory body may not be taken seriously or if they fear retaliation for their internal complaint, the ability to lodge a complaint with their local PAB may provide necessary security, transparency, and oversight.

This is important as not only are LEOs members of the public when off duty, but they may be the only witness/victim (while on duty) to police misconduct that, if a member of the public were to witness and lodge a complaint with the PAB, such action would require review by the local Administrative Charging Committee under the law.

For the above stated reasons, and in strong commitment to transparency and police accountability, the BCA respectfully request a favorable report on HB 122.

