

Statement in **SUPPORT** of

**HB 301 – Criminal Procedure – Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Search – Affidavit for Judicial Authorization**

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Chair Clippinger and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am here on behalf of the Maryland Chiefs and Police Association and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association to speak in support of HB301 which will allow law enforcement to utilize the Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Search technique, otherwise known as FGGS, in a more efficient way by removing a requirement that reasonable investigative leads have first been pursued and failed to identify the perpetrator. HB301 will enable investigators to begin the FGGS process much sooner following the commission of a violent murder or sexual offense once they have identified probative DNA evidence left behind by an unknown suspect. Detectives, who must act quickly to apprehend dangerous offenders and seize critical evidence, will no longer be required to unsuccessfully employ more traditional investigative techniques before seeking judicial authorization to begin the FGGS process. Rest-assured, investigators will continue to use all of the tools at their disposal while simultaneously pursuing FGGS in applicable cases. During the course of my own recent investigations, I have observed experienced law enforcement professionals, including senior detectives and prosecutors, differ in their opinions as to what constitutes the pursuit of reasonable investigative leads. HB301 will eliminate the need for investigators to second-guess themselves before submitting a sworn FGGS affidavit to the court. It is far more definitive to affirm that the perpetrator of a

violent crime is unknown and the use of FGGS may lead to that suspect's identification. The use of FGGS by law enforcement in recent years has resulted in the apprehension of numerous violent offenders who would otherwise remain on the loose and able to harm our citizens. HB301 will help to streamline the use of FGGS while also maintaining the requirement that this powerful investigative tool is subject to judicial authorization and oversight.