

DEBRA M. DAVIS, ESQ.
Legislative District 28
Charles County

Environment and Transportation
Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 21, 2025

Re: Testimony in Support of HB836 – County Police Accountability Boards - Investigation of Complaints of Police Misconduct

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett and Committee Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB836, which would empower County Police Accountability Boards (PABs) to conduct independent investigations into complaints of police misconduct. This bill represents a critical step toward increasing transparency, restoring public trust, and ensuring accountability in law enforcement across Maryland. HB836 seeks to rectify this issue by granting PABs the necessary authority to conduct investigations, ensuring that complaints of police misconduct are addressed fairly, thoroughly, and independently.

Key Reasons to Support HB836:

1. **Enhancing Public Trust and Transparency:** Allowing PABs to investigate complaints ensures that allegations of misconduct are not solely handled internally by police departments, which can create perceptions of bias. An independent review process fosters community confidence in the fairness of investigations.
2. **Ensuring Accountability and Justice:** When officers engage in misconduct, it is imperative that allegations are examined impartially. HB836 will help ensure that valid complaints lead to appropriate disciplinary action and systemic improvements, rather than being dismissed without due scrutiny.
3. **Providing Oversight Aligned with Community Interests:** Local communities deserve a voice in policing practices. By enabling PABs to investigate complaints, HB836 strengthens civilian oversight and aligns police accountability mechanisms with the expectations and concerns of the communities they serve.

HB836 does not seek to undermine law enforcement but rather to reinforce integrity and accountability within policing. Independent investigations serve to protect both the public and officers who are committed to ethical policing by ensuring a fair process for all.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to support and favorably report HB836. Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions and am available for further discussion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debra Davis".

Delegate Debra Davis, Esq.
District 28, Charles County