

**SB 118/HB 197:** Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Budget & Taxation Committee and Ways & Means Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **OPPOSE** Senate Bill 118 and House Bill 197 during committee consideration or floor votes.

While reducing violence through community-based efforts is a worthy goal, this bill is fiscally irresponsible and misprioritizes public safety resources. Maryland already faces severe budget pressures—rising costs for K-12 education, higher education, public pensions, health care (including the opioid and mental health crises), infrastructure maintenance, and tax relief for working families. Committing hundreds of millions more in automatic annual funding to a rapidly expanding set of non-enforcement programs—many of which lack rigorous, independent evidence of long-term effectiveness in reducing homicides or shootings—diverts money from proven strategies that directly remove violent offenders from our streets.

Law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and corrections remain the backbone of immediate public safety. Underfunding these core functions while massively increasing spending on unproven or inconsistently effective social programs risks weakening deterrence, allowing repeat violent offenders to remain free, and ultimately leading to more—not fewer—victims. In suburban and rural areas, where violent crime is often tied to drugs, gangs, or domestic violence, residents rely on effective policing and prosecution—not outreach—to feel safe.

**This bill also creates long-term structural budget obligations without dedicated revenue or clear accountability measures for outcomes. Taxpayers deserve evidence-based spending, not open-ended commitments to programs that may sound compassionate but have not consistently delivered safer communities.**

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote against SB 118/HB 197**. Oppose significantly increasing and expanding funding for non-law-enforcement violence prevention programs at the expense of core public safety functions.

Thank you for your attention to this critical public safety, fiscal responsibility, and evidence-based policy issue.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals

