

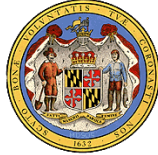
# STATE OF MARYLAND

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### **SUPPORT FOR SB 634**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

We are writing to express the support of the Office of the State Prosecutor for Senate Bill 634. The Office of the State Prosecutor is tasked with resolving political corruption, police misconduct and election integrity cases throughout Maryland and believes that this legislation will help protect members of the judiciary and the integrity of the judicial process in Maryland.

### **The Office of the State Prosecutor**

The Office of the State Prosecutor is an independent agency within the Executive Branch of government. The Office is tasked with ensuring the honesty and integrity of State government and elections by conducting thorough, independent investigations and, when appropriate, prosecutions of criminal conduct affecting the integrity of our State and local government institutions, officials, employees, and elections.

### **Senate Bill 634- Adding Judicial Threats to Office of the State Prosecutor Statute**

Senate Bill 634 expands the Maryland Office of the State Prosecutor's jurisdiction to include threats against judges pursuant to section 3-708 of the Criminal Law Article. The Maryland Office of the State Prosecutor has jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute certain enumerated crimes as specified in Criminal Procedure 14-107. The Office cannot investigate cases if the alleged principal crime falls outside the enumerated offenses, unless it is a multi-jurisdictional crime and then only by request of the Attorney General, local State's Attorney, General Assembly or Governor's Office.

Our Office is experienced in handling sensitive, high profile, controversial cases throughout the State. We are willing and able to take on the investigation of judicial threats in conjunction with local law enforcement, or as our statute provides, with the assistance of the Maryland State Police. However, we cannot handle these cases without modification to our statute, as most judicial threats occur in only one jurisdiction (and thus would not be able to be handled by our office even by request of the agencies identified above).

Importantly, while under Senate Bill 684 our Office would handle the investigation, per section 14-108 of the Criminal Procedure Article, we would have to provide a report to the local State's Attorney who would decide whether they wanted to prosecute the case or have a member of our office prosecute the case once the investigation was completed. Therefore, the elected State's Attorney would still have the opportunity to prosecute the case if they desire, as they would if

any other investigative body handled the investigation. We understand that judicial security is of the utmost importance in Maryland and throughout the country, and hope that we can utilize our proven legal and investigative abilities to protect those who hold public office in the service of justice.

Sincerely,

CHARLTON T. HOWARD, III  
STATE PROSECUTOR