



**OFFICE OF THE  
STATE'S ATTORNEY**  
CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

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**JAMES A. DELLMYER**

*State's Attorney for Cecil County, Maryland*

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Circuit Courthouse • 129 East Main Street, Suite 300 • Elkton, Maryland 21921 • Office: 410-996-5335 • Fax: 410-392-7814

**DATE:**                    **January 16, 2026**

**BILL NUMBER:**    **SB 129**

**POSITION:**            **Support**

The Office of the State's Attorney for Cecil County supports SB 129.

SB 129 extends statutorily protected warrantless arrests to domestic violence situations involving individuals identified under Family Law Article § 4-501 who are eligible for Protective Order relief. Current law under Criminal Procedure Article, § 2-204 provides for warrantless arrests of misdemeanor assaultive acts not committed in the presence of the officer, but ONLY in cases where the suspect perpetrates such acts against spouses or cohabitants.

Oftentimes law enforcement is met with evolving and different types of relationships that devolve into domestic violence situations. In numerous instances, the suspect may not be married or cohabitante with the victim at all yet are intimately involved and display all of the hallmarks associated with domestic violence. These incidences involving this population pose the same risks and challenges that gave rise to the implementation of enforcement methods prescribed under Criminal Procedure Article, § 2-204.

The inability to react through the mechanism of arrest hampers the capability of law enforcement to assess safety and support victims in a meaningful way. Victims of domestic violence that do not meet the definitions under Criminal Procedure Article, § 2-204, and already under the stress of the immediate violence, are typically told to go to the District Court Commissioner to obtain the same protections that could be provided under the law enforcement presence right before them. It seems both logical and appropriate to modify existing law to incorporate this unfortunate expanding component of domestic violence.

This straightforward legislation will immediately close this loophole and protect victims of violent crime and domestic violence as well as certain sexual crimes from harmful and offensive behaviors.

The Office of the State's Attorney for Cecil County seeks a favorable report on SB 129.