

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor



YAAKOV "JAKE" WEISSMANN
Acting Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

TITLE: SB0321 Public Safety - Law Enforcement Agencies - Use of Body-Worn Cameras

DATE: February 5th 2026

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings

POSITION: Letter of Concern

SUMMARY OF BILL: SB 321 expands the current law requiring the use of body cameras to include any situation when an officer is in uniform, in public, and conducting law enforcement-related duties. It also applies to all sworn law enforcement officers, regardless of rank, in all law enforcement agencies, not just state and county police.

EXPLANATION: The Department notes because the bill will apply to all law enforcement agencies, defined as "a governmental police force, sheriff's office, or security force or law enforcement organization of the State, a county, or a municipal corporation that by statute, ordinance, or common law is authorized to enforce the general criminal laws of the State," any agency or local law enforcement office not currently using body-worn cameras at the level required by this bill will face massive initial and ongoing costs. These include the physical procurement of camera hardware, docking stations, and the massive server infrastructure needed for high-definition video data storage. The bill will also likely increase the fiscal cost of procuring body-worn cameras, data storage, and related equipment. This legislation would have a potentially significant fiscal impact.

Additionally, the bill does not define what constitutes "law enforcement-related duties," nor does it define what it means for an officer to be "in public" or what it means to be in "uniform". This lack of clarity creates significant ambiguity, leading to inconsistent application. These undefined terms could apply to a wide range of activities not covered by existing body-worn camera policies, forcing agencies to develop new, more complex guidelines, which could impact bargaining implications.

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The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) is charged with submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually and will be working with the General Assembly to achieve structural balance over the long term. This mission is further complicated by significant federal uncertainty in both policy and budgetary areas, which requires the State to maintain a higher degree of fiscal resilience. The Department urges caution when passing legislation that significantly increases expenditures without commensurate reductions elsewhere. In light of the current fiscal crisis, the state government must be disciplined and strategic in its funding decisions to protect essential services. Any legislation that increases spending should include specific, identified, and sustainable funding offsets.

**For additional information, contact Dana Phillips at
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