



Bill Title: HB1262: **Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Restrictions**

Position: **SUPPORT (FAV)**

To: House Judiciary Committee

From: Erica Puentes, Legislative Coordinator on behalf of Progressive Maryland

Date: March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Erica Puentes** and I am the Legislative Coordinator for **Progressive Maryland**. Progressive Maryland is a statewide member led advocacy organization promoting racial, social, economic, and environmental justice. Progressive Maryland has over 120,000 individual members, supporters, and organizational affiliates statewide and works alongside hundreds of community, religious, labor and other grassroots allies to educate the public and build popular support for progressive victories. **Progressive Maryland is in strong support of HB 1262: Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Restrictions**, which seeks to codify existing constitutional protections against racial profiling by explicitly forbidding law enforcement from racial profiling.

Progressive Maryland stands firmly against racial profiling as this violates the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments and undermines public safety and community trust in our state. Racial profiling by law enforcement remains a persistent issue in Maryland. Black Marylanders are consistently stopped at disproportionately higher rates than white drivers. Among those stopped, Black drivers are less likely to receive a warning, more likely to receive a citation and more likely to be arrested. Moreover, for over a year, federal agents have been acting lawlessly across American cities by violating existing protections, racially profiling residents, and committing abuses without consequence.

The Supreme Court has indicated a desire to erode our constitutional protections against racial profiling, greenlighting practices in California long considered to be violations of the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments. Maryland must act now to ensure existing protections against racial profiling are not eroded here. Racial profiling does not make our communities safer. We must make it clear that when any law enforcement officer is using Maryland law in enforcement, they are bound by our state laws. Federal, state, and local law enforcement must be held accountable when they violate our rights.

Progressive Maryland believes in banning law enforcement from targeting someone based on that person's perceived or actual race, ethnicity, or nationality, rather than evidence of illegality. This legislature has the power to protect Marylanders from being racially profiled and limit abuses by law enforcement. This moment calls for every one of us to have courage in the wake of this lawless administration. **For these reasons, Progressive Maryland urges a favorable report on HB 1262.**