

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of HB0332, which would provide Maryland residents with a state-level path to seek redress when their constitutional rights are violated by government officials. This bill is an important step in strengthening accountability and access to justice, ensuring that individuals can hold public actors responsible when rights are unlawfully infringed.

At the same time, I recognize that such a cause of action introduces potential litigation risks and financial burdens for local governments and agencies. To maximize the effectiveness of this bill while protecting public resources, I encourage the inclusion of clear standards, procedural safeguards, and limits to ensure claims are valid, focused, and actionable. Examples could include guidelines for notice, thresholds for damages, or mechanisms to discourage frivolous suits.

In summary, HB0332 is a valuable measure for promoting accountability and protecting rights, but its implementation should be carefully designed to balance justice with practical safeguards. I strongly support the bill with the recommendation that the committee consider these enhancements.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Thompson