



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Sandy Bartlett, Chair and
Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Samira Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 24, 2026

RE: **HB 464 - Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warrants - Repeal**

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **OPPOSE HB 464**. HB 464 would repeal Maryland's existing authority to issue no-knock search warrants and require that all search warrants authorize only entry after prior notice of law enforcement's authority and purpose.

No-knock warrants are not a routine tool; they are an important, limited exception authorized by statute and governed by judicial scrutiny, supervisory approvals, specific factual requirements, and training standards. They are used in cases where announcing presence before entry would create an unreasonable risk to officer or civilian life, such as when exigent circumstances suggest that suspects may use deadly force, destroy evidence, or otherwise compromise the safety of executing officers or innocent bystanders. These situations often involve violent crime suspects, armed individuals, or others whose immediate awareness of law enforcement arrival would materially increase danger. Removing this carefully calibrated option entirely hampers law enforcement's ability to protect the public and officers in high-risk situations.

The current law requires authorization by a judge and includes safeguards intended to ensure that no-knock entries are granted only when supported by evidence that traditional knock-and-announce tactics would be ineffective or unsafe. Repealing all no-knock authority eliminates this flexibility and could force officers into scenarios where their safety and the safety of the community are needlessly jeopardized. Prohibiting no-knock warrants across the board fails to recognize the variety of operational realities faced in serious criminal investigations and diminishes law enforcement's ability to respond safely and effectively when swift, surprise entry is demonstrably necessary. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **OPPOSE HB 464** and urge an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report.