

**HB 349:** Public Safety - Law Enforcement - Use of Body-Worn Cameras: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to express my **strong opposition to HB 349** concerning the use of body-worn cameras by law enforcement agencies.

While transparency and accountability are important goals, **HB 349 takes a one-size-fits-all, state-mandated approach that undermines local control, creates serious due-process concerns, and risks unintended consequences for both officers and the public.**

Local law enforcement agencies already operate under detailed body-worn camera policies tailored to their communities, resources, and operational realities. **HB 349 overrides those locally developed policies** and substitutes rigid statewide requirements that fail to account for differences among jurisdictions. Decisions about deployment, activation, retention, and review of footage are best made at the local level, where agencies are directly accountable to the communities they serve.

Equally troubling are the **due-process implications**. Expansive recording mandates and altered access or disclosure rules **risk compromising ongoing investigations, officer safety, and the privacy rights of victims, witnesses, and bystanders**. Any system governing evidentiary recordings must include **clear standards, procedural protections, and limits on discretionary enforcement**. **HB 349 does not adequately provide those safeguards.**

Body-worn cameras should be tools that support lawful policing and public trust—not instruments that invite **after-the-fact second-guessing, selective enforcement, or politicization** of split-second decisions made in dangerous circumstances. Poorly designed mandates can discourage proactive policing and ultimately harm public safety.

Maryland should support transparency **without sacrificing due process, local governance, effective law enforcement or the safety of law enforcement officers**. **HB 349 fails to strike that balance.**

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **oppose HB 349**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals

