



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers its strong and favorable support for House Bill 835(HB835) –Criminal Procedure – No–Knock Search Warrants. This legislation removes the ability for police officers to enter without knocking or announcing themselves. HB 835 creates new regulations for how search warrants must be approved and executed. By enforcing this bill, this initiative will change how search warrants are issued and executed.

No-knock warrants are a dangerous law enforcement practice that jeopardizes the trust in the community and the safety of civilians. Unannounced entries can cause tragic, mistaken raids and violent confrontations. Residents feel feared and targeted, as no-knock warrants have disproportionately impacted marginalized communities. HB835 directly addresses racial disparities in the past and present. A report published by the Office of Legislative Oversight for Montgomery County in September 2024 analyzed use-of-force incidents and the execution of no-knock warrants revealed stark racial disparities. In 2023, Black individuals accounted for 997 incidents of public use of force, representing 57% of all such incidents in the county. Black residents comprise only 18% of Montgomery County's population. Additionally, the bill highlights that the no-knock warrants perpetuate inequities and foster fear rather than the safety of the citizens.

This critical issue also highlights why this legislation is a necessary step toward enhancing public safety, as data from the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services indicate that in 2022, 59 no-knock search warrants were issued in Maryland, which led to tragic outcomes.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports HB835.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland