

HB0835_Criminal_Procedure_No_Knock_Search_Warrants

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0835 No-Knock Warrants

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Acevero

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0835 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

No-knock warrants have long been in the news, particularly after the horrific death of Breonna Taylor. The original intention of this legislation was to prevent no-knock warrants. However, Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 still gives police officers a lot of leeway to barge into a home in the middle of the night and force more tragic outcomes.

HB0835 addresses the amendments our Coalition previously offered during the passage of the 2021 legislation. HB0835 (1) establishes that a search warrant may not authorize a law enforcement officer executing the warrant to enter a building, apartment, premises, or place to be searched without first announcing the officer's purpose and authority; (2) specifies that a search warrant may be executed only between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and (3) requires an officer to alert any occupants within the location of the officer's authority and purpose.

MLC understands the need for search warrants. We even understand the need for law enforcement officers to have the element of surprise. However, we cannot put innocent people at risk to the extent we've seen historically. In addition, we agree with Maryland Department of Legislative Services that based on anecdotal evidence from other states and local jurisdictions, the bill's prohibitions on no-knock warrants could have a positive impact on Black individuals.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

No Knock Warrants HB 835 Testimony Hawkins.pdf

Uploaded by: Christina Hawkins

Position: FAV



NATASHA DARTIGUE
PUBLIC DEFENDER

KEITH LOTRIDGE
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

ELIZABETH HILLIARD
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BILL: HB 835- No-Knock Warrants

FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender

POSITION: Favorable

DATE: February 11, 2026

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee issue a favorable report on House Bill 835.

House Bill 835 repeals the authority for the issuance and execution of no-knock search warrants. It establishes that a warrant may not authorize an officer to enter a building, apartment, premises or place without first announcing the officer's purpose and authority. It specifies that a warrant may be executed only between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and requires an officer executing a search warrant, prior to entering certain areas, to give reasonable notice to alert any occupants within the officer's authority and purpose.

My name is Christina Hawkins. I am the Statewide Peer Support Manager for the Maryland Office of the Public Defender as well as a person in long term recovery from a substance use disorder. Being a person in recovery qualifies me to provide support and insight to the individuals that we serve; as I have lived through active addiction and understand the behaviors, feelings, emotions, decision making and so much more that is involved with someone in the grips of addiction. My lived experience also gives me insight on injustices and gaps in our judicial system- especially to those who are suffering from substance use disorders.

The years 2018 and 2019 were some of the hardest years of my life- reaching bottoms I had never thought possible and suffering the most significant losses of my life including my daughter to the child welfare system and my fiance to an overdose. I was honestly spiraling out of control and that undoubtedly received attention from the local authorities.

In January of 2019, the Drug Court program in my area sent me to inpatient drug treatment as a final attempt to save my life. I completed the program and returned to my home to give recovery

another shot. I had secured a job interview for the afternoon of February 12, 2019. I woke up that morning and started getting ready for the day which included taking a shower. However, no more than five minutes after I entered the bathtub, I was suddenly startled by the sound of my front door being forcefully breached, followed by the chaotic entrance of police officers into my residence. A male police officer made his way into the bathroom where he found me naked in the shower. He called the only female officer on site, into the bathroom. She provided me with a robe and a pair of slippers she found in my bedroom. I was humiliated and terrified.

The police continued to search my house while I stood in a robe, still wet, and unclear about what was happening. The officers found an empty cellophane baggie with what appeared to be residue and arrested me for possession. I was brought to the commissioner in a robe and slippers, wet hair, in the winter, snow on the ground. The next day, February 13th, the case was dismissed and I was released from the detention center in the same robe and slippers I had on the previous day.

If House Bill 835 was in place on February 12, 2019- the officers coming into my home would have been required to announce their arrival and reason for entering my home. They would not have been able to come in and find me naked and vulnerable. It would have saved me from the unnecessary embarrassment I suffered, as well as the aftermath of me having to walk the streets with nothing on but a robe and slippers.

Today, with 7 years in recovery, I still remember this as one of the most embarrassing moments of my life. I still hold resentments towards the police officers for making me feel like I was not a human while they violated my privacy and my home. HB835 provides rights and insight to human beings who are being investigated for various reasons and are at risk for a no-knock search warrant.

For these reasons, I urge this Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 835.

Submitted by: Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Government Relations Division.

Authored by: Christina Hawkins, christina.hawkins@maryland.gov, 410-344-3401.

LWVMD_02.24.2026_HB 0835_Testimony in support of C

Uploaded by: Cynthia Boddie-Willis

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY TO THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

HB 0835 – CRIMINAL PROCEDURE - NO-KNOCK SEARCH WARRANTS

POSITION: FAVORABLE

BY: Linda Kohn, President

DATE: February 24, 2026

The League of Women Voters believes in the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. The League is convinced that individual rights now protected by the Constitution should not be weakened or abridged. This includes 4th Amendment of the US Constitution which states: “The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.” The League of Women Voters further supports a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, and transparent in its policing practices.

By prohibiting no-knock warrants, **HB 0835** seeks to reduce the confusion and possible harm that unanticipated searches or seizures may cause by requiring law enforcement officers to announce their purpose and authority, execute warrants between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and give reasonable notice of the officer’s authority and purpose to alert any occupants of the premises to be examined.

There have been multiple and well-documented [instances](#) of innocent persons who have been harmed during the execution of no-knock warrants performed in the middle of the night, sometimes at the wrong address. Moreover, a ban on no-knock warrants follows the spirit of fair and transparent policing which characterized legislation that created the Police Accountability Boards under the [Maryland Police Accountability Act \(MPAA\) of 2021](#).

For these reasons, **the League of Women Voters of Maryland**, a member of the Maryland Coalition for Justice and Police Accountability and representing nearly 2,000 citizens throughout Maryland in its own right, **strongly urges you to issue a FAVORABLE report.**

HB835 Favorable 2026.pdf

Uploaded by: Debi Jasen

Position: FAV

Judiciary Committee
House Bill 835
Favorable

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Judiciary Committee;

Please give House Bill 835 a favorable report.

If someone breaks into your house, you have the right to defend yourself and your family. It would be understood, if not expected, for you to grab a weapon to confront intruders while your family hid or escaped through another exit. No-knock search warrants create situations in which residents could easily end up pointing firearms at law enforcement officers. No-knock search warrants put both residents and law enforcement officers at extreme risk of serious injury or death. Flying bullets would put others at risk as well, both inside and outside of the residence. And all of this simply because law enforcement didn't identify themselves. We should protect everyone from unnecessary violence. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Debi Jasen
Pasadena, MD

PFPT Testimony on HB 835 No Knock Warrants - Supp

Uploaded by: Ferd Hoefner

Position: FAV

Testimony on House Bill 835 – Favorable

**Presbyterians for Police Transformation
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church**

Regarding HB 835 – Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warrants

**Submitted to the
Maryland House Judiciary Committee**

February 24, 2026

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

Presbyterians for Police Transformation offers favorable testimony in support of **HB 835 - Criminal Procedure – No-Knock Search Warrants**. We are grateful for the opportunity to offer strong support for HB 835 No Knock Warrants, sponsored by Delegate Gabriel Acevero. We endorse both the legislation's goal of eliminating no knock warrants and limiting hours that warrants can be served.

Members of the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church are active in anti-racism work including efforts to redefine public safety and transform policing through the efforts of our working group, Presbyterians for Police Transformation. We have been studying and advocating for changes that will place the sanctity of life above all else, in other words to create a guardian rather than a warrior culture within police departments.

Banning no knock warrants as well as limiting the hours that warrants can be served is a needed addition to the Police Accountability Act of 2021 to further that goal. Surprising someone by forcing entry into one's home unnecessarily creates a response controlled by instinct rather than an understanding of the situation. This frequently ends in tragic and avoidable deaths or serious injuries to the people inside, the police officers themselves and/or innocent bystanders. And to what end? To confiscate evidence. That is troubling as it seems to us that evidence is seen as more valuable than a human life.

We strongly urge you to unanimously issue a **favorable report** on **HB835**.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Submitted by Ruth Noel (rmnoel@verizon.net) on behalf of Presbyterians for Police Transformation, 310 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912

MD HB 835_NPAP_FAV (No-Knock Warrants).pdf

Uploaded by: Keisha James

Position: FAV



SUPPORT - HB 835

Written Testimony of National Lawyers Guild-National Police Accountability Project, Keisha James, Staff Attorney
House Judiciary Committee – Tuesday, February 24, 2026

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comment on this important issue. The National Lawyers Guild National Police Accountability Project (“NPAP”) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to holding law enforcement officers accountable to constitutional and professional standards. We urge you to give a favorable review to HB 835, which seeks to repeal the authority for the issuance and execution of no-knock search warrants.

The murders of Breonna Taylor and Amir Locke have shone a light on the prevalence and brutality of no-knock warrants. Similarly, the viral video of the wrongful raid on Anjanette Young’s home exposed how traumatic no-knock raids can be for survivors. But no-knock warrants have been causing significant harm in Maryland for years.

In 2019, a Montgomery County firefighter’s home was raided by police officers carrying out a no-knock warrant.¹ The officers, seeking to arrest the son of a tenant who lived in a separate unit in the basement, raided upstairs instead, using excessive force against the firefighter, his wife—who was receiving in-home dialysis treatment, and his 13-year-old daughter.² In 2018, police officers raided a home in District Heights at 10:30 PM based on an uncorroborated tip from a confidential informant.³ The owner, understandably thinking the officers were intruders and wanting to protect himself and his daughter, fired a single shot, hitting two officers.⁴ In 2009, police officers, armed with automatic rifles and battering rams, raided a home in Silver Spring with a no-knock warrant, pinning the owner on the floor and zip tying his hands before searching the home and finding nothing.⁵

¹ Valerie Bonk and Jack Moore, *Firefighter sues over no-knock raid: Montgomery Co. police ‘terrorized an innocent family’*, WTOP NEWS (May 6, 2021), <https://wtop.com/montgomery-county/2021/05/firefighter-sues-over-no-knock-raid-montgomery-co-police-terrorized-an-innocent-family/>.

² *Id.*

³ Gina Cook and Tracee Wilkins, *Father Shot 2 Officers Who Mistakenly Served Warrant at His Home*, NBC 4 WASHINGTON (Sept. 21, 2018), <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/father-shot-2-officers-who-mistakenly-served-warrant-at-his-home/54589/>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Andrew Limbong, *Police raided George Pelecanos’ home. 15 years later, he’s ready to write about it*, NPR (Feb. 5, 2024), <https://www.npr.org/2024/02/05/1225720457/george-pelecanos-owning-up-crime-fiction-book>.



No-knock raids are an immensely dangerous policing tactic broadly authorized by Fourth Amendment jurisprudence that are almost never justifiable as a net benefit to public safety. Police departments that execute no-knock raids create a high risk of death, injury, and emotional trauma for the occupants of the home they are searching. The execution of no-knock warrants generally entails a “dynamic entry” into the premises, breaking down doors, detonating explosive devices, and restraining residents while forcing them to lie prone on the floor.⁶ All of these features make no-knock raids exceptionally dangerous.

In addition to the risks related to the paramilitary tactics used to carry out no-knock raids, warning-less entries into a person’s home add another level of danger for all parties involved. When police break into a person’s home without knocking and announcing, the resident can reasonably mistake the officers for burglars or other violent intruders, especially at night—and be more likely to return force.⁷ These features make no-knock warrants dangerous for both civilians and officers. Over a five-year period, at least 81 civilians died in no-knock raids across the country and there have also been a number of documented deaths of police officers during no-knock warrant executions.⁸

The most direct way to reduce the negative consequences of no-knock warrants is to ban them. Although Maryland has previously passed legislation banning *some* no-knock warrants,⁹ HB 835 seeks to ban *all* of them. First, the bill requires officers to execute warrants during the day between the hours of 8 AM and 7 PM. Second, HB 835 requires police officers to announce their authority and purpose before executing a search warrant. These provisions will eliminate no-knock raids and make searches less dangerous.

In addition to the significant human costs, unrestricted no-knock warrants also expose municipalities to costly legal bills and settlements. Fourth Amendment jurisprudence authorizes the execution of no-knock warrants in limited circumstances.¹⁰ However, the broad discretion afforded to officers in seeking a no-knock warrant and often minimal judicial oversight of application requests create a likelihood that warrantless entries can

⁶ ACLU, *War Comes Home: The Excessive Militarization of American Policing* at 40 (2014); Radley Balko, *Overkill: The Rise of Paramilitary Police Raids in America*, Cato Institute at 4-5 (2006).

⁷ Brian Dolan, *To Knock or Not to Knock? No-Knock Warrants and Confrontational Policing*, 93 St. John’s L. Rev. 201, 206 (2019).

⁸ Kevin Sack, *Door-Busting Drug Raids Leave a Trail of Blood*, N.Y. TIMES (Mar. 18, 2017), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/18/us/forced-entry-warrant-drug-raid.html>; The Justice Collaborative Institute, *End No-Knock Raids* (2020).

⁹ SB178 limited the use of no-knock warrants in situations where a person’s life is in danger and banned the use of no-knock warrants at night (unless there were exigent circumstances). It also required officers to be in uniform and wearing body-worn cameras when executing any search warrant.

¹⁰ *Richards v. Wisconsin*, 520 U.S. 385 (1997).



lead to constitutional violations.¹¹ These breaches of the Constitution can result in costly settlements and judicial verdicts. HB 835 will allow police departments and municipalities to limit liability and minimize their exposure to legal risks.

Maryland would not be alone in banning the use of no-knock warrants. Given the high risk of death and serious injury associated with the execution of no-knock warrants, police departments, city councils, and state legislatures have decided to ban or regulate their use in order to protect their communities from harm.¹² No-knock warrants have already been banned in Oregon, Virginia, Florida, and Tennessee.¹³

We urge you to help save lives in Maryland and give HB 835 a favorable review. I am happy to answer any questions you may have. You can contact me at keisha.npap@nlg.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keisha James', written over a white background.

Keisha James
National Police Accountability Project

¹¹ See, e.g., L. Joe Dunman, *Warrant Nullification*, 124 W. Va. L. Rev. 479, 509-512 (2022) (collecting reported instances nationwide where judges spent minimal or no time at all reading warrant applications before signing them); Mary Nicol Bowman, *Full Disclosure: Cognitive Science, Informants, and Search Warrant Scrutiny*, 47 Akron L Rev 431, 442-43, 461-63 (2014) (citing studies showing judges typically spend “between two and three minutes per warrant application” and that the warrant application process primes judges to defer to the police narrative of the case, which can often be incomplete or misleading); Richard Van Duizend, et al., *The Search Warrant Process: Preconceptions, Perceptions, and Practices* 26 (1984) (same).

¹² Tessa Duvall and Darcy Costello, *In cities and states across the U.S., Breonna’s Law is targeting deadly no-knock warrants*, THE COURIER JOURNAL (Mar. 17, 2021), <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/local/breonna-taylor/2021/03/12/spread-of-breonnas-law-across-us-has-become-policy-legacy/4642996001/>.

¹³ Limbong, *supra* n. 5.

HB0835 - Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warr

Uploaded by: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

Position: FAV



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Chair
Delegate Debra Davis, Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: 2/24/2026
RE: HB0835 - Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warrants

The MLLC supports HB0835 - Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warrants

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0835.

Throughout the nation, no-knock warrants are notorious for creating inherently dangerous interactions between law enforcement officers and civilians. In Maryland specifically, recent reports illustrate that a majority of SWAT deployment and no-knock warrants occur in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County.¹ These counties have large minority, specifically Latino and Hispanic, populations which leads to disproportionate impacts as a result of these SWAT deployments and no-knock warrants. Rationales for such law enforcement operations are often the need for preservation of evidence and safety of law enforcement; however, research demonstrates that 36% of no-knock warrants fail to produce evidence of drugs and that 50% were executed on homes without guns.² As a result, Maryland Latino and Hispanic communities, who may already have apprehensions toward law enforcement, are unjustifiably subject to unsafe interactions with law enforcement.

By repealing the authority to issue and execute no-knock search warrants, and generally establishing new procedures for the issuance and execution of search warrants, e.g., clearly announcing before entering and only executing warrants during daytime hours, this bill would promote safer interactions between overpoliced minority communities and law enforcement. For the Latino community in particular, this legislation would help build trust between the Latino community and state law enforcement in a time where tensions are particularly high due to federal immigration enforcement. Ultimately, this bill would better protect all minorities from being unnecessarily subject to unconstitutional intrusions of their dwellings which may lead to confusion and safety concerns.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0835.

¹ [PS §§ 3-508\(e\) and 3-525\(e\); GOCPP; SWAT Team Deployment and No-Knock Search Warrants 2024 Report](#)

² [No-Knock Warrants - Center for Justice Research](#)

Late testimony

Uploaded by: N. Scott Phillips

Position: FAV



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
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Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

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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

SSJC Testimony in Support of HB 835 (Prohibiting N

Uploaded by: Robert Landau

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 835
Before the House Judiciary Committee
Submitted February 20, 2026**

Submitted by:

Robert Landau
Silver Spring Justice Coalition
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

The Silver Spring Justice Coalition (SSJC) is a coalition of community members, faith groups, and civil and human rights organizations from throughout Montgomery County committed to eliminating harm caused by police and empowering those communities most affected by policing. In furtherance of this goal, we urge you to support HB 835, which will ban the use of no-knock warrants.

We have all heard and seen horror stories about no-knock warrants gone bad. Breonna Taylor is just one of many of the Black community lost to no-knock warrants gone awry. As noted by the Legal Defense Fund:

We know many examples of police executing no-knock raids at wrong addresses, such as the raid that resulted in seven-year-old Aiyana Stanley-Jones' death. We know of police throwing a flashbang and grievously injuring an 18-month-old toddler known as "Bou Bou" by his family. We know that plain-clothes law enforcement officers forcefully entered 92-year-old Kathryn Johnston's residence in a no-knock raid, and, when she fired one shot that did not strike any officer, police shot at her 39 times, killing her.¹

In 2019, a no-knock warrant executed by Montgomery County police injured a firefighter of color, his wife and child - none of whom was the subject of the warrant. The error led to a lawsuit against the county for \$2.5 million.²

¹ <https://www.naacpldf.org/end-no-knock-warrants/>

² https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/no-knock-warrant-lawsuit/2021/05/05/833b8e3a-adc9-11eb-acd3-24b44a57093a_story.html

Given that no-knock warrants are among the most dangerous and hazardous police activities,³ it is surprising to many that they are usually granted by magistrates and judges simply on an officer's say so. Moreover, given the current legal standards, officers need to say little to justify the grant of a no-knock warrant, and as a result, they are used far too frequently. As reported by the Washington Post:

. . . judges generally rely on the word of police officers and rarely question the merits of the requests, offering little resistance when they seek authorization for no-knocks, a Washington Post investigation has found. The searches, which were meant to be used sparingly, have become commonplace for drug squads and SWAT teams.⁴

Not only are no-knock warrants dangerous, but some data suggests there are significant racial disparities in the use of no-knock warrants. The Center for Criminal Justice states: “[police raids may be racially disparate](#); in one study, 42% of households raided under SWAT search warrants had Black occupants.”⁵

We observed that the [bill's 2025 DLS Racial Equity Impact Note](#) indicated that Montgomery County is tied with Baltimore County for the most no-knock warrants with 14 in 2023. Montgomery County Police have a well-documented history of having disproportionate impact against Black and Brown people when it involves use of force and traffic stops. That correlation cannot be a one-time occurrence. The bill's 2025 DLS REI Note indicates that the bill would have a positive impact on Black people.⁶ The General Assembly should eliminate this unnecessary policing tool that appears to be racially discriminatory.⁷

The argument that no-knock warrants are needed to surprise and subdue dangerous people is a false self-fulfilling prophecy. Of course, people who have guns — sometimes legally — are likely to defend themselves when they think that criminals are breaking into their homes. The opponents' argument that no-knock warrants have, in some cases, yielded valuable evidence or led to the capture of criminals misses the point. The real question is whether the same results were not possible with a warrant that requires law enforcement to announce themselves and wait 20 seconds before entering. This bill's ounce of prevention could prevent many unnecessary deaths and injuries.

³ See <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/2022/04/06/no-knock-warrants/>

⁴ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/no-knock-warrants-judges/>

⁵<https://counciloncj.foleon.com/policing/assessing-the-evidence/iii-no-knock-warrants-and-police-raids>

⁶ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/Pubs/BudgetFiscal/2025RS-HB0255-REIN.pdf>.

⁷ See also, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2020/12/01/louisville-police-no-knock-warrants-mostly-targeted-black-residents/6456241002/>

A Google search for settlements of wrongful no-knock warrants yields a long litany of high-dollar settlements that cost taxpayers millions.⁸ No-knock warrants are too susceptible to fatal errors, and their results are not worth the risks.

The 2025 DLS Note points out that six other states, including Virginia, have prohibited no-knock warrants. Maryland should follow those enlightened states.

No-knock warrants are not worth the danger they pose to innocent civilians or law enforcement officers. Think about it: Officers don't need no-knock warrants to seize thousands of fentanyl pills, or kilos of illegal drugs. Those quantities can't be destroyed when police serve a regular warrant. Nor are no-knock warrants needed to seize guns or other contraband. The no-knock warrant is obsolete, and it has been so abused, particularly to the harm of people of color, that attempting to reform the process short of its elimination is futile.

The only solution is to pass this bill. We urge a favorable report.

⁸https://www.google.com/search?q=settlements+of+improper+no-knock+warrants&rlz=1C5CHFA_enUS1023US1032&oq=settlements+of+improper+no-knock+warrants&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUyBggAFFUYOTIHCAEQIRigATIHCAIQIRigATIHCAEQIRigAdIBCTI4MDI1ajBqNKgCALACAQ&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

Testimony in support with amendments of HB0835 - C

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Position: FWA

HB0835_RichardKaplowitz_FWA

02/24/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/0835- POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warrants

TO: Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0835, Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warrants

This bill appears to be a response to the illegal and constitutional actions of DHS and ICE. As reported by the Brennan Center there exists a *DHS Warrantless Home Entry Memo's Fourth Amendment Problem - New ICE directive goes against longstanding policy — and the Constitution.*¹

The Cornell Law School Legal Information Institute defines:²

A no-knock warrant is a [search warrant](#) authorizing police officers to enter certain [premises](#) without first knocking and announcing their presence or purpose prior to entering the premises. Such warrants are issued where an [entry](#) pursuant to the [knock-and-announce rule](#) (ie. an announcement prior to entry) would lead to the destruction of the objects for which the police are searching or would compromise the safety of the police or another individual. The requirement that announcing police presence would result in destruction of objects or compromise safety is judged by a [reasonable suspicion](#) standard.

While they serve as a tool for law enforcement, no-knock warrants are controversial due to risks of, at times, fatal, violent, or wrongful raids. They are often used in high-stakes situations such as murder investigations or during the War on Drugs. The practice has come under intense scrutiny, with some jurisdictions moving to limit or eliminate them following public outcry.³

The American Immigration Council has stated:⁴

The aggressive actions of federal immigration agents in Minnesota and cities around the country have drawn attention to an important truth: Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP, which includes U.S. Border Patrol) agents are routinely going far beyond what the law allows them to do. Their aggressive tactics on the ground are backed up by unprecedented interpretations of their legal authorities, with the

¹ <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/dhs-warrantless-home-entry-memos-fourth-amendment-problem>

² https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/no-knock_warrant#:~:text=A%20no%2Dknock%20warrant%20is%20a%20search%20warrant,safety%20of%20the%20polic%20or%20another%20individual

³ Google AI Search "why have no-knock search warrants"

⁴ <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/ice-cbp-legal-analysis/>

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agencies secretly adopting aggressive new policies toward entering homes and making arrests without judicial warrants.

In some cases, the Trump administration's actions have taken advantage of broadly-worded provisions in federal law that they argue allow immigration agents a lot of power – despite what people's common-sense intuitions might be about what is allowed. In other cases, agency guidance and lack of accountability have combined to undermine the force of law, allowing immigration officials to engage in widespread violations.

This bill would repeal the authority for the issuance and execution of a no-knock search warrant; establishing that a warrant may not authorize an officer to enter a building, apartment, premises, or place without first announcing the officer's purpose and authority; specifying that a warrant may be executed only between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and requiring an officer executing a search warrant, before entering certain areas to be searched, to give reasonable notice to alert any occupants of the officer's authority and purpose.

I favor an amendment to the bill in which these warrants may not be issued for immigration enforcement without specific constitutional guarantees on the conduct of the resulting contemplated actions by law enforcement. The persons conducting such a no-knock immigration raid may not be issued that warrant absent proof it is criminal actions and not civil immigration violations that are the reason for the warrant request. Police can maintain this regrettable but sometimes necessary action but with stronger controls over what specific actions are or are not permitted in exercising that warrant.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable with amendments report on HB#/0835.

MSP Position on HB0835.pdf

Uploaded by: Breanna Mowbray

Position: UNF



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Unit
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: February 24, 2026

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 835 **Position: Oppose**

BILL TITLE: Criminal Procedures - No-Knock Search Warrants

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS:

This legislation seeks to repeal the authority of the court to issue no-knock search warrants. The bill repeals the authority of the police officer, with state's attorney approval, to apply for a no-knock warrant. A law enforcement officer attempting to serve a search warrant is required to announce the officer's purpose and authority. This legislation also seeks to limit the hours during which a court authorized warrant may be executed and mandating that an officer, before entering certain areas to be searched. In addition, mandating a 20 second wait after providing notice to inform any occupants of their authority and purpose.

Under current law, a law enforcement officer may apply for a no-knock search warrant if the application meets a certain criterion and the application is reviewed and approved by a supervisor and the local state's attorney. The provision of law regarding the legality of no-knock warrants is based on case law *Richards v. Wisconsin* and was upheld by the United States Supreme Court. The Court did not, however, give unilateral authority for waiving the knock and announce requirement. The Court ruled that the state supreme court's blanket exception to the knock-and-announce requirement, that police officers were never required to knock and announce their presence when executing a search warrant in a felony drug investigation, was unconstitutional. The ruling was affirmed in *United States v. Ramirez*.

The Department makes use of the "No Knock" warrant in very specific circumstances and the warrants are only executed by a highly trained team within the Department. The circumstances that the Department uses to determine if a warrant will be served as a "No Knock":

- Criminal history of the primary suspect(s);
- Felony nature of the crime being investigated;
- Is there an arrest warrant for the primary suspect (is it for a crime of violence);
- Ability to destroy evidence;
- Fortification of the structure;
- Terrain to be traversed to get to the structure;
- Is a surreptitious approach possible;
- Are there other articulable reasons why it is necessary to remain unknown to the suspect until the time of the service; and
- Is it safer for the suspects as well as the officers involved to contact them (Knock and Announce) prior to them realizing we are present.

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POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

All requests for “No Knock” warrants are screened by a member of the Special Operations Division (SOD). Either a team leader or Unit Commander conducts the screening based on the above available information. Once a decision has been made, the SOD Command staff is notified prior to a final decision being made. In all cases, the warrant team is briefed by the local investigators to ensure the most current and useful information is known. For example, investigators on surveillance, contact the lead investigator and advise they observed the subject leaving the premises or has already been detained, they will downgrade the “No Knock” to a “Knock and Announce”.

The Department acknowledges the risk taken on all search warrants. The use of a “No Knock” warrant is designed and executed to minimize the risk to both the officers serving the warrant and the residents who are subject to the warrant. The elimination of all “No Knock” warrants would potentially have a detrimental effect on both groups.

In 2022, the Department proposed amending the then existing law to require a second review by the local State’s Attorney’ Office of the county where the warrant is to be served prior to its execution. The legislature agreed and enacted this requirement.

House Bill 835 restricts the execution of all warrants and limits service between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. This restricts the ability to serve the warrant as well as enables the person subject to the warrant to either avoid the location during those hours or destroy/ conceal evidence outside of the prescribed hours.

For these reasons, the Department of State Police urges the Committee to give House Bill 835 an unfavorable report.

MCPA-MSA HB 835 No-Knock Search Warrants - Repeal

Uploaded by: Samira Jackson

Position: UNF



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 835 - Criminal Procedure - No-Knock Search Warrants**

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **OPPOSE HB 835**. HB 835 would effectively eliminate the ability of courts to authorize no-knock search warrants and would require that warrants be executed only after law enforcement provides notice of their authority and purpose, regardless of the circumstances.

No-knock warrants are not routine or casually sought. They are a narrowly used tool reserved for exceptional, high-risk situations where advance announcement would create an unreasonable danger to officers, occupants, or the broader community. These warrants are typically associated with violent offenders, firearms-related investigations, or cases where there is credible evidence that announcing police presence would lead to armed resistance, destruction of evidence, or immediate harm. In these limited circumstances, the ability to execute a warrant swiftly and safely can prevent escalation and protect lives.

Maryland law already requires judicial oversight and significant safeguards before such authority is granted. No-knock entry is permitted only when supported by specific facts and approved by a judge, ensuring it remains an exception rather than the norm. HB 835 removes this carefully controlled discretion entirely, eliminating law enforcement's ability to respond appropriately to the most dangerous and time-sensitive situations. Additionally, the bill's further restrictions on the execution of warrants may create unnecessary operational barriers that could compromise officer and public safety during critical investigations. Accordingly, we believe HB 835 would undermine a necessary public safety tool and place officers and communities at greater risk. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **OPPOSE HB 835** and urge an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report.

HB 835 - No-Knock Warrants.pdf

Uploaded by: Scott Shellenberger

Position: UNF

Bill Number: HB 835
Scott D. Shellenberger, State's Attorney for Baltimore County
Opposed

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SCOTT D. SHELLENBERGER,
STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY,
IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 835
NO-KNOCK WARRANTS

I write in opposition to House Bill 835 that eliminates law enforcement's ability to execute no-knock search warrants, but also limits the time of day a knock and serve search warrant can be executed. Passing HB 835 will put officer safety at risk and will greatly affect law enforcement's ability to do their job.

Previously the General Assembly passed a Bill that created extensive protections for the issuance of no-knock search warrants. The Bill has only been in effect for a short time. The statute can be found at Criminal Procedure 1-203.

No-knock search warrants allow officers to enter a location without first knocking. They are used for the officer's safety. Current law requires that no-knock search warrants be approved by an officer's supervisor. No-knock search warrants must be signed by the elected State's Attorney; therefore, it is one of the only two duties the State's Attorney may not delegate to an Assistant State's Attorney. The other duty being a wiretap. The signature of the State's Attorney was done so that someone politically accountable would be a party to this important decision.

These warrants may only be issued if the life or safety of the executing officers or another person could be endangered. An application for a non-knock search warrant shall contain a description of the evidence in support of the application, an explanation of the investigative activities that have been undertaken and the information that has been gathered to support the request for a no-knock search warrant, an explanation of why the affiant is unable to detain the suspect or search the premises using other, less invasive methods, and acknowledgment that any police officers who will execute the search warrant have successfully completed the same training in breach and call-out entry procedures as SWAT team members.

Also included in the application is a statement as to whether the search warrant can effectively be executed during daylight hours and, if not, what facts or circumstances preclude effective execution in daylight hours, a list of any additional occupants of the premises by age and gender, as well as an indication as to whether any individuals with cognitive or physical disabilities or pets reside at the premises, if known, and a no-knock search warrant shall be executed between 8:00am and 7:00pm absent exigent circumstances.

Additional requirements are that entering officers must be clearly recognizable as police officers and if the agency has body cameras, then the entering officers shall use

their body camera. All these added protections and double checks strike an important balance between protection of the public and police officer safety. Outlawing no-knock warrants put law enforcement at risk.

I urge an unfavorable report.