

## Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services



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**BILL: SENATE BILL 260**

**POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION**

**EXPLANATION:** This bill proposes to establish a Police Officers' Performance Review Board that will be an independent board within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. The Board will be able to conduct annual reviews of police officer performance, hold hearings, and impose sanctions for racially discriminatory behavior by police officers.

**COMMENTS:**

- The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services' (DPSCS) mission protects the public, its employees, and detainees and offenders under its supervision.
- DPSCS's Division of Correction (DOC) operates approximately 17 State correctional facilities which house offenders sentenced to incarceration for 18 months and longer.
- The Department is tasked with overseeing the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP), which supervises individuals within the community who are either awaiting trial, placed on supervised probation, have been paroled by the Maryland Parole Commission, or placed on Mandatory Supervision upon release under the authority of the Maryland Parole Commission. DPP also supervises Marylanders who have been court-ordered into the Drinking Driver Monitor Program.
- SB 260 mandates annual reviews of police officer performance and provides the ability to impose certain sanctions. DPSCS employs less than 1% of law enforcement officers; therefore, having the expertise to staff a police performance review board is limited and would result in the need to hire additional personnel.
- With more than 11,200 officers in the State and 160 police agencies, staff should consist of compliance personnel with expertise in police performance.
- SB 260 grants the Board the ability to conduct hearings and impose sanctions resulting in the need for the Department to hire additional staff, including attorney(s) and human resources personnel.

- DPSCS operates the State prisons. As such, DPSCS is not best suited to house a Board that is charged with reviewing police performance.

**CONCLUSION:** For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates on Senate Bill 260.