

Favorable Testimony for SB 178 - Anton's Law

January 21, 2021

Senators,

Hello! My name is Kristin Mink, and I'm a resident of District 20. I'm also a mom, and a graduate of and former teacher for Montgomery County Public Schools. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. I support all five of the ACLU's policing priorities, and I'm writing today to express my support for reforming the MPIA and passing SB 178, Anton's Law.

In Maryland, 90% of complaints against officers made by the public are not sustained. We have seen numerous cases where officers have engaged in criminal misconduct, and in the criminal trials that follow, we learn of a long record of departmental charges where they were acquitted. The lack of meaningful oversight and accountability is causing great and preventable harm. The failure to pass Anton's Law again and again is allowing this harm upon your constituents to continue.

The public information act needs to be amended to make crystal clear that records of internal investigations will be treated like every other police record about every other member of the public. As those sworn to protect the community, the police should be under greater scrutiny and held to a higher standard, rather than the opposite.

Police need oversight by the COMMUNITY. Lack thereof undermines community trust in the police, because we all know that people who have nothing to hide, hide nothing. Anton's Law would still allow police departments to consider everyone's privacy — including officers and residents — before releasing any information. Passing Anton's Law is a small step toward repairing the broken trust between law enforcement and the people they are sworn to serve. As such, officers who truly put the community first should support it. But regardless, it's up to you, our electeds, to deliver the transparency and accountability needed to keep us safe.

The time — the moment — is now. Please be bold. Our community needs it and is ready for it. Please deliver a favorable report on Anton's Law, SB 178. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Kristin Mink

308 Penwood Rd.

Silver Spring, MD 20901

(301) 325-1578