



Charles County Government

CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*  
Bobby Rucci, *Vice President*  
Gilbert O. Bowling, III  
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.  
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.

Mark Belton  
*County Administrator*

February 11, 2021

**Committee: Judiciary**

**Testimony on: HB1024 – Charles County – Citizens Complaint Oversight Board**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: February 15, 2021**

Chairman Clippinger and members of the Judiciary Committee,

As the Commissioner President in Charles County, I respectfully request favorable action on HB1024, to establish a Charles County Citizens Complaint Oversight Board.

Law enforcement oversight and accountability is a hotly debated national topic, particularly in light of several highly publicized events in recent months and years. Charles County has taken this moment as an opportunity to examine how we might make improvements in the area of public safety and police accountability in our own community. We are committed to ensuring proper protocols and processes are in place to facilitate fair and just disposition of citizen complaints against our local law enforcement. We view this legislation as a necessary tool to ensuring police accountability in our community.

It is the opinion of the Charles County Commissioners that an independent oversight board of law enforcement misconduct investigations will improve the complaint process by providing mechanisms and locations outside of law enforcement facilities to accept complaints and provide nonpolice driven feedback on the status and outcomes, thereby making it more inclusive and transparent. The citizen complaint oversight board will provide an independent voice to hold our law enforcement accountable.

We believe that all of our community stakeholders have a shared desire for safer communities, and working partnerships across interested groups. This legislation takes us one step closer to the kind of impartial and credible oversight needed in our community to foster and maintain trust in our local law enforcement. Charles County believes that a civilian oversight board of this nature will deter the kind of actions by law enforcement that will result in citizen complaints, in addition to equipping the Board to provide meaningful action should those complaints arise.

Letter Identifier (Re: Line)  
Page 2  
Date

Please provide a favorable report on HB1024. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

*/s/*

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq.  
Charles County Commissioner President