

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

This testimony is being submitted by residents of District 46 who are also community leaders in Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore. SURJ is a group of community members supporting local groups working for greater racial justice in Baltimore and the State of Maryland. We are **testifying against HB 671**.



HB 671 allows a subset of records related to investigations into police misconduct to be disclosed under the Maryland Public Information Act. While we are in full support of the disclosure of details of internal investigations of police misconduct and brutality, we find that this bill is insufficient in disclosing all information necessary to ensure meaningful and consistent police accountability, especially given the opportunity to pass a more holistic bill in Anton's Law (House Bill 120 and Senate Bill 178). While HB 671 details a specific subset of misconduct complaints and removes them from the category of personnel records, Anton's Law simply removes police misconduct records entirely from the definition of personnel records.

All police misconduct records are relevant to the public interest, and fall into a very different category than true personnel records such as job applications and scholastic achievements. Allowing the community to know what happens to specific complaints as well as the broad picture presented by an officer's history of complaints fosters accountability. In the wake of recent shocking incidents of violence by police against Black citizens and the systemic failures to investigate misconduct brought to light by the Gun Trace Task Force scandal, it is more important than ever that police departments be transparent and accountable to the communities they serve. HB 671 is a step forward, but it will not take Maryland the full distance.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to **vote against HB 671** and instead support a better alternative in Anton's Law (House Bill 120/SB 178).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

SURJ District 46 Community Leaders

*Sarah Goldman*

*Christina Pham Linhoff*

*Ben Goldberg*

*Liz Simon-Higgs*

*Brian Seel*

*Lilly Chappa*

*Natalia Skolnik*

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