

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor



Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services
100 Community Pl.
Crownsville, MD 21032

March 8, 2023

Chairman Luke H. Clippinger
House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building, Room 101
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB1045 Public Safety - Safe Neighborhoods Pilot Program

Dear Chairman and Committee Members:

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (Office) is providing this letter of information for HB1045: Public Safety - Safe Neighborhoods Pilot Program.

House Bill 1045, if passed, shall take effect October 1, 2023 and will remain in effect for a period of three (3) years, and end September 30, 2026 with no further action required by the General Assembly. This bill proposes the Office shall establish a Safe Neighborhoods Pilot Program that will:

- Purchase doorbell cameras or security systems with doorbell cameras and install the cameras or systems in the homes of residents who apply to participate in the program.
- Engage community organizations and residents to promote community participation in the program.
- Provide training for residents on the use of a doorbell camera or security systems with a doorbell camera, including how to access video produced by the camera.
- Establish a process for residents to contact law enforcement in order to submit video obtained by a doorbell camera as evidence.
- Provide information to residents on the process for the submission of video captured by a doorbell camera to law enforcement.

On or before December 31, 2025, the Office shall report to the General Assembly on the crime rate within the identified high-crime areas following the implementation of the program; the total number of crimes solved with the aid of evidence obtained by cameras provided through the program; the sense of security

amongst resident participants of the program; and the usefulness and viability of the program based on a cost-benefit analysis.

The following concerns regarding this bill are:

- This legislation requires staff to directly engage with community organizations and residents to promote community participation in the Program, which is a service oriented type of program and expands the scope of work performed by the agency. The agency does not have current resources, both from an operational and staffing perspective, to adequately implement and carry out the program.
- GOCPYVS is not a certified training entity within the State of Maryland.
 - Training staff or procurement of training services will be needed to satisfy the doorbell training requirement to residents, which includes how to access the video.
 - Publicizing an area as a high-crime area presents a liability issue.
 - The Office would need to establish a process for residents to contact law enforcement to submit video evidence obtained by a doorbell camera as evidence. Further, residents may be reluctant to share obtained video footage with law enforcement through the Program.
 - Processes already exist within local jurisdictions to contact law enforcement to submit video evidence.
 - This program has the potential to be exploited for profit in lieu of turning over video footage to law enforcement.
 - GOCPYVS already places Notification of Funding Availability (NOFA) notices on its website.

This bill, if enacted, would require that GOCPYVS hire a procurement officer, statistical analyst, policy administrator, program manager, grant manager, and facilitate procurement with at least 24 separate vendors for equipment and installation. The total procurement for the initial start up of the server/storage, software, and network/interface/security is estimated at a minimum cost of \$250,000.00. The Office would need to develop measures that protect the privacy of residents and ensure that any data collected is securely stored and protected from unauthorized access or breaches. GOCPYVS and the State already have very secure IT systems in place. GOCPYVS would also need to adopt regulations to implement the Program. Additionally, a Policy Administrator familiar with development of COMAR regulations will need to be hired to satisfy this requirement.

Please feel free to reach out to our office's Interim Acting Legislative Liaison Joseph Cueto at joseph.cueto@maryland.gov should you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,



Veronica Moulis

Interim Acting Executive Director