

HB0228 Public Safety- Persistent Aerial Surveillance

Stance: Support

Testimony: My name is Adiena Britt from the 45th Legislative District. I am writing to offer my support of HB0159. I found the first iteration of this bill last year, but it didn't have a chance to be considered because of the unexpected hit of COVID and your session was cut short. There was also an issue this year because the rules for testimonial submissions changed from how I formerly offered testimony, and I fear with the MLK Holiday that I missed the VERY NARROW window for submission.

HB159 Persistent Aerial Surveillance- putting limitations on the use of and requiring an agency to obtain a warrant to use such technology. This is important to me due to the use of the Persistent Surveillance Systems planes over Baltimore for 6 months last year. I have e-mailed all of my representatives about my opposition to the use of these types of things, and the reason being is that they do not have proof of any added benefit to the Police. This Company was allowed to constantly fly overhead, back and forth over "The Black Butterfly" of Baltimore snapping pixels every second or so, for hours. Droning its motors on and on and on. Polluting the air with diesel exhaust and noise pollution. It wasn't used in an equal nature, just over certain parts of Baltimore. It was unproven technology, and didn't assist in providing any reduction in crime. Just circling around, and gladly, sucking up some out of state philanthropist's money.

I do not feel it would be a proper use of tax payer money to ever fund such a project again. I also believe it to be a violation of Civil Rights. Especially when it is used in such a targeted manner as I have stated above. There are no circumstances where any constituency in any jurisdiction in our fine state should be subjected to this type of thing.

I appreciate that Del. Grammer put in the special circumstances where use of a helicopter/plane would be warranted (no pun intended); as is the case in most current uses of the local and state police helicopters, and in the event of a National Emergency. I am in hopes that this bill will serve to thwart any other snake oil salesman from strutting into our state selling us some unfounded, unconstitutional services. I believe flying surveillance flights goes against the citizens civil rights, and have very specific misgivings about PSS's in particular. However, this bill covers any future use of this technology without proper warrants and justification and I fully support this bill. I am in hopes that it gets beyond readers and is brought forth to the full House of Delegates for passage into law.

Thank you

Adiena C. Britt

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