



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Chief of Staff David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee
Sheriff Darren Popkin, Co-Chair, MSA, Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 3, 2022

RE: **HB 296 – Interim and Temporary Protective Orders – Electronic Filing and
Video Conferencing Hearings**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT HB 296**. This bill would authorize a person who is receiving medical treatment from a hospital or urgent care facility (medical facility) to electronically file a petition for a domestic violence protective order under *Md. Code, Family Law Article, §4-504, and §4-504.1*, while at the medical facility. It would also provide for a video conference hearing on a petition for an interim order from a District Court Commissioner or a temporary order from the Courts.

MCPA and MSA strongly support the extension of early access provided by HB 296 to essential domestic violence protections during a petitioner's first initiation of remedial efforts.

The process outlined in the bill also makes use of remote video technology for access and conferencing that have been developed by the Courts and Legislature during the last two years in response to pandemic limitations on access to Courts and governmental facilities. In addition, the legislation will make use of experience from the pilot program for protective order video conferencing currently utilized between the [Montgomery County Family Justice Center](#) and the Courts in Montgomery County, Maryland.

MCPA and MSA is aware of an amendment to remove urgent care centers from the bill, but still offer support as HB 296 would facilitate early intervention into critical domestic violence situations and would help prevent injuries and save lives. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT HB 296** and urge a **FAVORABLE** report.