



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 6, 2024

RE: **HB 249 – Public Safety – Statewide DNA Database System, DNA Collection,
Expungement, and Penalties - Alterations**

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT HB 249 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill addresses issues associated with the DNA database statute.

The Maryland Department of State Police's Forensic Sciences Division oversees the statewide DNA database. This database has been an incredibly successful tool over the years, assisting investigators to implicate perpetrators, exonerate the falsely accused, and link serial crimes in Maryland and across state lines. MCPA and MSA believe this bill will close loopholes in the statute making the database an even more valuable tool in solving crimes.

MCPA and MSA are aware of amendments being discussed by the Maryland State Police and the Maryland Correctional Administrators Association to address situations where individuals may refuse to give samples. With these amendments, employees who attempt to take samples will be deemed as meeting their charge if individuals refuse to give them; and individuals who refuse to submit a DNA sample will be referred to the State's Attorney's Office. As several Sheriffs oversee local detention facilities, MCPA and MSA support these amendments and encourage the Committee to adopt them.

MCPA and MSA support all efforts for operational improvements to make the DNA database more effective and appreciates the amendments to address circumstances where individuals may refuse to provide samples. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT HB 249 WITH AMENDMENTS** and urges a **FAVORABLE** Committee report as amended.