



House Bill 1355

Public Safety - Interjurisdictional Policing Grant Program - Establishment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: March 3, 2020

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1355 as it provides counties with valuable public safety resources to fight crime.

Communities that align or straddle county borders are often affected by crime issues that cross those jurisdictional boundaries. It's important that law enforcement in those counties can successfully work together to tackle interjurisdictional crime. Interjurisdictional policing agreements provide a framework for collaboration and a means of leveraging limited resources.

HB 1355 establishes an Interjurisdictional Policing Grant Program administered by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to counties to defray costs associated with establishing and supporting agreements between two or more counties to collaborate on interjurisdictional law enforcement activities. The bill requires the governor to appropriate \$3.5 million annually in the state budget to fund the program.

Grant awards must be proportionate to the population and geographic size of the counties applying for the grants and the scope of the overall agreement. If the interjurisdictional agreement spans multiple years, the grants may be spread across multiple fiscal years. To ensure there is proper accountability, partnering counties who must jointly apply for the grant must report annually on the use of the funds.

HB 1355 provides needed financial support to counties who are joining forces to fight interjurisdictional crime. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1355.