

Anita Lampel
Bethesda, MD

**TESTIMONY AGAINST UNLESS AMENDED: BILL 49-21 (ENABLING LEGISLATION FOR
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGING COMMITTEE)**

January 18, 2022

**To: Montgomery County Council
From: Anita Lampel**

My name is Anita Lampel. I live in Bethesda, Maryland, in District 1 with my husband. I am submitting this testimony to oppose Bill 49-21 unless it is significantly amended.

I am a retired child psychologist, a parent of two, and grandparent of four. My heart broke when I saw the body cam footage of a little – really, tiny – kindergarten boy being handcuffed, loaded into a police car, called out in the harshest way, and threatened to be whooped. Montgomery County Police Officers did this. And I know that County Councilmembers also reacted! I attended the hearing in which Police Chief Jones testified that the officers were somehow vaguely disciplined but he could not say how, and they were back on the street where they could do this very same behavior again. I was appalled. I saw the shock on the faces of Councilmembers, too.

This Police Accountability Board addresses police misconduct at all levels, from the most egregious killing of an innocent person to the level of profound psychological harm. It addresses issues of repeated complaints against officers. The intent of the Maryland Police Accountability Act, the state-level bill which mandates our County's creation of Police Disciplinary Boards, is to make police accountable to the communities they serve in a way that has not existed before.

However, what we have in front of us is a proposal that, [as the Office of Legislative oversight's powerful RESJ Impact Statement explains](#), mimics in all ways the current MCPD hearing board, stacked with folks who understand policing and administrative issues but not with folks who understand their community's distress and lived experience. This bill was drafted with no community input. The bill creates an unacceptable conflict of interest by requiring the County Attorney to serve as PAB counsel, even though the County Attorney also represents the MCPD and the County. Additionally, the bill does not allow for compensation to PAB members, diminishing its importance and also the likelihood that community members can serve who are not retired, or have lots of money, or plenty of time.

Leadership is about listening to community input and being in front when positive social change needs to occur. I respectfully urge the Montgomery County Council to amend the bill to address the issues noted above.

Submitted by:

Anita Lampel