

Jesse Glickstein  
Takoma Park, MD

**Testimony Against Unless Amended - Bill 49-21 (Enabling Legislation for Police Accountability Board and Administrative Charging Committee)**

**January 14, 2021**

**To: Montgomery County Council**  
**From: Jesse Glickstein**

My name is Jesse Glickstein. I live in Takoma Park, Maryland in District 5 with my wife and two children. This testimony is to oppose MC Bill 49-21 (Enabling Legislation for Police Accountability Board (“PAB”) and Administrative Charging Committee (“ACC”)) unless amended in order to strengthen the bill, something that I understand is supported by several Councilmembers, the [Office of Legislative Oversight](#), and the majority of organizations engaged on this issue in our community. I am testifying on behalf of myself and am a member of Jews United for Justice.

A great Jewish leader who recently passed away, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, [published Seven Principles of Jewish Leadership](#). I urge this Council to read all seven of these principles, but the following principle struck me as particularly relevant here:

**“Leadership means believing in the people you lead:** Judaism prefers the leadership of influence to the leadership of power. Kings had power. Prophets had influence but no power at all. Power lifts the leader above the people. Influence lifts the people above their former selves. Influence respects people; power controls people”

As most on the County Council are aware, in 2021 alone, there have been six unjustified killings by police in Montgomery County. To date, no police responsible for these deaths have been convicted, and most have been exonerated of any crime. Since 2004 there have been at least ten unnecessary killings by police. This does not take into account the many instances of police abuse that did not end up in killings – the officers who abused the five-year old child at East Silver Spring Elementary School and the officer convicted of assaulting a young man by slamming his face into the ground are still on active duty. Montgomery County has not been immune to the problems of police abuse that have been highlighted long before, and since, George Floyd’s murder.

I have several concerns I would like to express with MC Bill 49-21 in its current form, many of which are [underscored in the bill’s Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement](#) and all of which are against the Jewish principles of leadership I outlined above. First, the bill was drafted without any community input, and so does not reflect the needs of the community (especially those communities most impacted by police and police abuses). The bill also requires members of the boards to have experience in one of three areas, which will perpetuate the status quo for police discipline in Montgomery County. The bill’s membership requirements will lead to a PAB that looks exactly like our current law enforcement agencies, and makes it almost impossible for people outside of law enforcement to serve on the PAB,

therefore excluding those communities who have suffered from bad policing. This does not reflect the Jewish values of respecting and listening to those you lead. The exclusion of community members, particularly from the PAB, conflicts with the intent of the new state law. The PAB is intended to ensure true community involvement in the disciplinary process. Further, the bill fails to ensure regional representation and diverse lived and professional experience, and only provides compensation for the ACC. Not requiring compensation for members of the PAB diminishes the importance of the work of that board and creates additional barriers to meaningful community participation. The Bill also creates unacceptable conflicts of interest by requiring the County Attorney to serve as PAB counsel, when the County Attorney also represents the MCPD and the County.

As stated above, leadership is about listening to and respecting those you have been elected to lead. Therefore, I respectfully urge the Montgomery County Council to amend MC Bill 49-21 in order to address the above concerns. I urge the Council to follow the Jewish principle of believing in the people you lead when the community is speaking to you and advising its leaders on their needs.

Regards,

Jesse Glickstein