



## Montgomery County Lodge 35, Inc.

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[www.foplodge35.com](http://www.foplodge35.com)

### STATEMENT ON EXPEDITED BILL 49-21

LEE HOLLAND

PRESIDENT, MONTGOMRY COUNTY FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE LODGE  
35

Members of the Council:

On behalf of the membership of more than 1500 active and retired women and men in Montgomery County law enforcement, thank you for the opportunity to comment on Expedited Bill 49-21, Police Accountability Board - Administrative Charging Committee – Established.

While this legislation doesn't currently apply to members of Montgomery County FOP Lodge 35 (our collective bargaining agreement does not expire until June 30, 2023), as partners in reform, we are hopeful that the system and composition of the hearing boards envisioned by this proposed legislation will advance fairness, justice and due process through the greatest possible degree of citizen input.

To be clear, we believe there can be no true reform without robust citizen input through representation on hearing boards.

This is and has been the position of Montgomery County FOP Lodge 35 for over 30 years, including:

- Being the first law enforcement agency with a citizen member (Since 1991 have had a neutral citizen who has resided in most cases within the State of Maryland and Montgomery County);
- Advocating for the addition of two citizen members to the states hearing board process during the General Assembly's 2016 LEOBR police reforms; and
- Advocating for a greater number of citizens on hearing boards than the recently passed HB670 in 2021.

Having spent thousands of human hours at the bargaining table, proposing/enacting a fair hearing process with citizen input and during the previous administration defending the removal of the citizen from the process, we have come to believe that citizens with experience and/or training of employment law, are in the best position to be impartial, deliberative and fair when it comes to review of police matters.

For those citizens and law enforcement who remember history, police management is not always the best arbiter of truth and fairness when it comes to administering its own departments. To that point, decisions made by the self-interests and preservation of a few police chiefs over the decades represent a marred history, replete with examples of rampant racial, sexual, and gender discrimination and graft by police management, and

against sworn officers and the public, in some police department across our great state.

It is this terrible history that has informed our position and belief that the most judicious and fair arbiter of justice are unbiased and trained citizens, disconnected from political, self-interested, and career entanglements of a bureaucratic actors within the labyrinth of police management. To that end, we hope that the Council and Executive take the opportunity and this moment to enact reforms that truly advance the cause of citizen input , above all else.

Thank you, and we look forward to our continuing partnership with the public, the Council and the Executive in order to build reforms that deliver true accountability and justice in the criminal justice system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee Holland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Lee Holland