



ADVISORY COMMISSION ON POLICING

TESTIMONY REGARDING

BILL 33-25, POLICE – COMMUNITY POLICING – ANNUAL REPORT DEADLINE

NOVEMBER 18, 2025

Dear Council President Stewart and Members of the County Council:

Pursuant to the charter of the Advisory Commission on Policing (ACP), we would like to convey our advice regarding Bill 33-25, Police – Community Policing – Annual Report Deadline.

We welcome this bill, which coincides with one of several recommendations we conveyed to you in our letter of October 13, 2025, regarding the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) reporting requirements of Sec. 35-6A(c) of the Montgomery County Code. In our letter, we recommended that the Council amend subparagraph 1 of Sec. 35-6A(c) Reporting Requirements of the Montgomery County Code by changing the due date of the mandatory reporting requirements from February 1 to April 15.

Based on our research, the February 1 deadline does not allow the department sufficient opportunity to cull and verify the calendar year's data. As a result, the annual Police Statistical Data Report contains imperfect data that conflicts with the more accurate data provided by subsequent Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) reports. In turn, the conflicting data generates unnecessary confusion that hinders Council oversight and undermines efforts to promote MCPD transparency with the public.

The recommendation of the Advisory Commission on Policing (ACP) for an April 15 due date was meant to balance the need to ensure that MCPD is able to collect, cull and verify the data it

Advisory Commission on Policing

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reports with the need for timely reporting. But the bill's April 1 deadline may well accomplish our desired intent. This hearing may help you decide whether April 1, April 15, or another similar date best balances the interests of accuracy and timeliness.

Our wish, however, would have been that Bill 33-25 also address the other four recommendations in our letter. While it may not be practicable to do so in this bill, we urge the County Council to also take action on the other four recommendations aimed at streamlining and improving MCPD reporting. These recommendations support our (MCPD, the Council, and the public) shared interest in an improved understanding of how MCPD practices impact our community and whether its actions result in public safety improvements.

Below we reiterate the other four recommendations we recommend in your legislative agenda:

Consolidate Reporting: *We urge the Council to work with MCPD to consolidate Departmental reports.* The data required under Sec. 35-6A(c) is reported to the County's Executive and Council in the Police Statistical Data Report, but it is not published publicly. This data is not particularly sensitive and much of it is made public in MCPD's Annual Report on Crime and Safety, which is usually published in April. Therefore, consolidating these two reports, and possibly others, would reduce duplication of effort and waste, as well as promote increased transparency.

Community Survey: *We recommend that the County Council amend Sec. 35-6A(d) Annual survey of the Montgomery County Code by eliminating the requirement that MCPD "annually conduct an anonymous survey of residents and officers regarding police-community relations, including, at a minimum, the levels of trust communities have in the police."* We agree that community surveys are essential to objectively evaluate MCPD's practices and the community's satisfaction with MCPD services. But no funding has been provided for this survey for the fiscal years 2024 through 2026, and MCPD currently does not have the capability to conduct such a survey. Moreover, MCPD should not be put in the position of evaluating how the community perceives it. To ensure impartiality and effectiveness, such a survey should be conducted either under the auspices of the County Executive or the Council, or by an independent polling entity contracted by the County. *A low-cost alternative would be to include relevant questions in the Public Safety portion of the annual the National Community Survey "livability" survey.*

Data on Crime Victims: *We urge that the Council amend Sec. 35-6A(c) Reporting Requirements of the Montgomery County Code to add disaggregated demographic data on crime victims to the required data sets of the annual Police Statistical Data Report.* Crime victim data is necessary to evaluate the services provided by MCPD to the sectors of our community that are most impacted by crime and police practices, but it is not included in the required submission. Its inclusion would be a step toward towards addressing the ACP's longstanding concern that MCPD's reporting is overly focused on outputs and is insufficiently tied to the outcomes. Adding the crime victim data should not impose an additional burden on MCPD, as Council staff reports that the Department readily provided victimization data on multiple occasion upon request.

Uniformity of Demographic Data: *We recommend that the Council require MCPD to report racial and ethnic demographic data uniformly with the Census and Maryland's Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard, i.e.: Asian, Black, Hispanic, White, and Other.* Currently, MCPD's Annual Report on Crime and Safety reports racial and ethnic data separately, which is confusing and could understate the impact of certain police practices on underprivileged members of our community.

In closing, I would like to underscore that the Commission's recommendations are based on the interest we share with MCPD, the public, and the County Council in promoting the effective transparency that helps the Department and improves public safety outcomes by fostering trust in, and cooperation with, those members of our community we have chosen to protect us.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this bill.

Rev. Brian Bellamy

Chair,

Montgomery County Advisory Commission on Policing