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## **SPEAKER JONES, HOUSE JUDICIARY CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCE POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY WORKGROUP**

ANNAPOLIS, MD - Today, Speaker of the House Adrienne A. Jones and House Judiciary Chairman Luke Clippinger announced the formation of an interim Workgroup to Address Police Reform and Accountability in Maryland.

“Policing in America is broken. While we have taken a number of positive steps in Maryland, we can’t be satisfied until every citizen has confidence in their police department,” said **Speaker Jones**. “As the mother of two sons, accountability in policing is not just philosophical, it is personal.”

During the shortened 2020 legislative session, Speaker Jones committed to work on issues around use of force and the Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights. The events around the country this week have expedited the timeframe for this work to begin this summer instead of the fall.

“We have done important work in Maryland over the last several years, but it isn’t enough,” said **Chairman Clippinger**. “We are seeing record levels of crime in Baltimore City, at the same time that the Baltimore Police Department is under a federal consent decree. I am hoping to see recommendations for tangible reform that restores trust and helps communities build real relationships with the law enforcement that serve them.”

During the first year of Speaker Jones’s leadership, Chairman Clippinger led a months-long process to improve disclosure of police records which resulted in the passage of House Bill 1221, which passed the House of Delegates Judiciary Committee before the session abruptly ended.

The Workgroup will be chaired by House Judiciary Vice Chair Vanessa Atterbeary.

“As the mother of three young children, two of whom are boys, issues of police trust and accountability remain in the forefront of my mind each day,” said **Vice Chair Atterbeary**. “The events around the country this week have underscored that we cannot wait another day. We need structural reform ideas from the community and law enforcement to fix this problem in a collaborative way.”

The Workgroup will specifically:

- Review policies and procedures related to the investigations of police misconduct, including Maryland’s Law Enforcement Bill of Rights statute;
- Determine the viability of uniform statewide use of force policies and arrest procedures;
- Review the use of body cameras and disclosure of body camera footage; and
- Identify national best practices of independent prosecution of law-enforcement related crimes.

The Workgroup will begin meeting this summer and make recommendations for the 2021 legislative session.

Members appointed to the Workgroup include:

- Speaker Pro Tem Sheree Sample-Hughes
- Minority Whip Kathy Szeliga
- Assistant Majority Leader Wanika Fisher
- Vice Chair of Appropriations Michael Jackson
- Black Caucus Chair Darryl Barnes

- Criminal Justice Subcommittee Chair David Moon
- Government Operations Subcommittee Sandy Rosenberg
- Delegate Gabe Acevero
- Delegate Curt Anderson
- Delegate Jason Buckel
- Delegate Debra Davis
- Delegate Mike Malone
- Delegate Susan McComas

The Commission to Restore Trust in Policing, legislation passed by Senator Bill Ferguson and then-Delegate Cory McCray, is set to complete their work at the end of 2020 after focusing for two years on reforms to the Baltimore City Police Department after the Gun Trace Task Force corruption probe.

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