
From: jimgormley@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, March 16, 2025 4:07 PM
To: Anderson, Isaiah; CouncilMail
Subject: RE: Legislative Public Hearing 3/17 - WebEx Link
Attachments: 2024 PAB Scorecard 3-12-25.pdf; PATF-HoCo Response to HoCo PAB 2024 Annual Report 3-12-25.pdf

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Hi Isaiah,

As discussed, I am attaching two documents, for the attention of each County Council Member and for the record, in support of my testimony on Monday night on behalf of PATF-HoCo.

See you Monday evening!

james gormley



Police Accountability Task Force
of Howard County

**PATF-HoCo's
2024 Annual Scorecard For
Howard County
Police Accountability Board (PAB)**

PATF-HoCo Assessment of HoCo PAB's 2024 Performance

Date: March 12, 2025

Howard County Police Accountability Board

PATF-HoCo's 2024 Annual Performance Scorecard

- PATF-HoCo prepared this scorecard for the purpose of informing Howard County's leadership, law enforcement agencies (LEAs), the media and the community about the 2024 performance of Howard County's Police Accountability Board (PAB)
- Criteria and metrics used for this evaluation are the same as for the 2023 scorecard and are focused on the legal obligations of the PAB under Maryland state legislation and regulations to ***“ensure public accountability and transparency over the powers exercised by law enforcement agencies”*** ⁽¹⁾ and ***“work with law enforcement agencies and the County Government to improve matters of policing”*** ⁽²⁾
- This evaluation is based on publicly available information only, including information made available in PAB open meetings and in its 2024 annual report

⁽¹⁾ Code of MD Annotated Regulations (COMAR) 12.04.09.03A

⁽²⁾ Maryland Public Safety Code Annotated § 3-102







PATF-HoCo's 2024 PAB Scorecard Methodology

Methodology used to evaluate PAB's 2024 performance considered 6 performance metrics as set forth on slide 4 (same as 2023).

These metrics are aligned with the PAB's legal obligations under Maryland state legislation and regulations as set forth on slide 2.

PATF-HoCo then evaluated the PAB's performance using the rating scale descriptions defined on this page.



Rating Scale		Description
5 Star		Outstanding Performance
4 Star		Exceeded Expectations
3 Star		Fully Fulfills Responsibilities
2 Star		Needs Improvement
1 Star		Severely Deficient
0 Star		Total Failure

Performance Metric

Score

2024 HoCo PAB Scorecard Results

1. Has the PAB taken specific actions to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?



PAB failed to timely and effectively address significant racial disparities in 2022 LEA data. Despite alarming 2022 racial disparities in arrests, **PAB failed to request 2023 arrest data update.** This inexcusable neglect is a clear dereliction of duty, undermining public accountability and transparency in LEA oversight.

2. Has the PAB made and advanced specific policy recommendations to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?



PAB **reiterated its recommendation for a limited independent 3rd party study** in its 2024 Annual Report but failed to effectively advance its own four (4) Board recommendations, initiatives, and inquiries to Howard County LEAs from the June 2023 meeting. **Few new policy actions were made or pursued in 2024.**

3. Has the PAB acted in a timely and diligent manner to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?



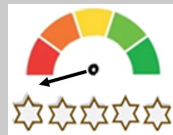
After long delays, **PAB proposed limited 3rd party study on traffic stops in its 2023 annual report**, but failed to include a recommendation for broader key racial disparity analysis, including arrests and use of force. In 2024, it **took five months to follow up**, at which time the PAB pulled back from its outstanding recommendation by proposing that LEAs first review other police departments' approaches to racial disparities before committing to the 3rd party study. This **completely stalled momentum** and was an ineffective engagement with HCPD and County leadership..

4. Have PAB actions brought about specific and measurable improvements in policing and in public accountability and transparency?



It is **difficult to identify any achievements or actions of any kind by the PAB in 2024** that resulted in making material improvements in policing in our County.

5. Has the PAB engaged effectively with the HoCo LEAs and County Leadership to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?



At the April 2024 County Council meeting focused on racial disparities in policing, the **PAB failed to speak or advocate for its own 3rd party study recommendation.** In separate meetings, HCPD's PAB liaison officer admitted having no answers for the causes of disproportionate stops of Black individuals. **PAB did not effectively engage with HCPD to drive the question WHY, further weakening its oversight.**

6. Has the PAB regularly and substantively communicated with the public concerning its activities?



The PAB has reported no details on the PAB's community engagement nor about how that engagement has led to meaningful actions that benefit the community, especially those most affected by policing disparities. It **failed to share critical 2022 racial disparity data with the community** or respond to PATF's 2023 oversight recommendations. We appreciate that PAB members met with a student representative (only one of its legally required meetings) and some members attended a PATF meeting to hear our concerns, **but more proactive engagement is needed.**

HoCo PAB Performance 2023 Compared to 2024

Performance Metric	2023 Score ⁽¹⁾	2024 Score	2024 Performance Declined, Equal or Improved?
1. Has the PAB taken specific actions to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?			
2. Has the PAB made and advanced specific policy recommendations to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?			
3. Has the PAB acted in a timely and diligent manner to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?			
4. Have PAB actions brought about specific and measurable improvements in policing and in public accountability and transparency?			
5. Has the PAB engaged effectively with the HoCo LEAs and County Leadership to improve policing and ensure public accountability and transparency?			
6. Has the PAB regularly and substantively communicated with the public concerning its activities?			

PAB's Performance In Fulfilling Its Legal Obligations Under MD Legislation & Regulations

PAB Performance Significantly Declined in 2024

⁽¹⁾ Visit website (www.patf-hoco.com) for details of the 2023 PAB Scorecard

Executive Summary *

Summary of 2024 Performance & Observations

Following the PAB's low score in 2023, the PAB's performance in 2024 can only be described as **an abdication of its responsibilities to ensure transparency and accountability in policing** in Howard County.

Significant factors in the PAB's disappointing performance are:

- The PAB's continuing failure to take any meaningful measures to address the racial disparities in policing disclosed in the 2022 LEA data, with no effective follow up on its 2023 recommendation of a third-party study (*See Appendix pages 11-12 for summary of 2022 LEA racial disparity data*).
- The PAB's continuing failure to effectively communicate these racial disparities to the community and to Howard County Leadership
- The PAB's continuing failure in requesting updated non-public 2023/24 LEA data on officer arrests and other officer engagements.
- The PAB's continuing failure to take effective and timely actions to advance the policy recommendations it had voted on in 2023.

Overall Rating Score



Total Failure

*** NOTE:** In the spirit of transparency, PATF-HoCo provided the PAB with an advance courtesy copy of this report on February 28, 2025 and offered them an opportunity to comment or respond before this report was published. As of the date of this document we have not received a response.

Next Steps – Recommended Action

HoCo PAB completely failed to meet its legal obligations to ensure police transparency and accountability in 2024. **PAB Performance in 2024 was worse than its disappointing performance in 2023!** The PAB must be held accountable in order to fulfill the legislative mandate set forth by the state of Maryland. PATF-HoCo:

- Calls for the immediate resignation of Ms. Nellie Hutt from the PAB, given her leadership role at the PAB during this period of non-performance
- Then calls on Dr. Ball (County Executive) to consult immediately with the community on filling the ensuing open position of Chair of the PAB, as well as the two currently open PAB member positions and to earnestly consider the community's recommendations for candidates for these PAB positions
- Reiterates each of its recommendations from its 2023 PAB Scorecard (Appendix page 10)

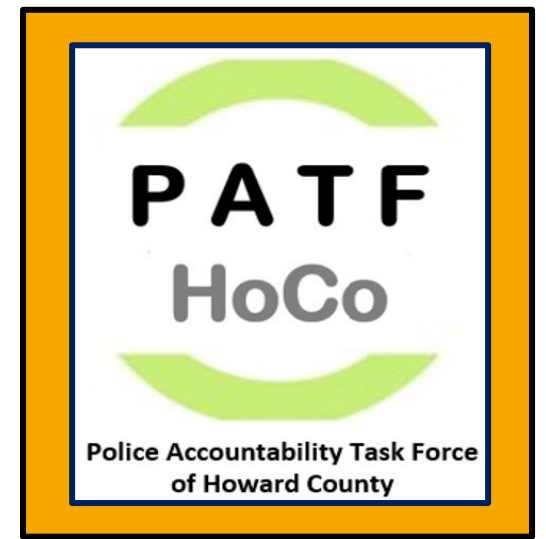
Questions / Contact / Join Us



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WEBSITE:
www.PATF-HoCo.com

Appendix



- Page 10: 2023 PATF-HoCo Recommendations
- Page 11: 2022 HoCo LEA Racial Disparities (Across Multiple Categories)
- Page 12: 2017 – 2021 HoCo LEA Racial Disparities (Black Driver Stops)
- Page 13: About US
- Page 14: PATF-HoCo Coalition Partners

The following are PATF-HoCo's recommendations From its 2023 HoCo PAB Scorecard Report

We recommend that the PAB act diligently and proactively to take the following effective measures:

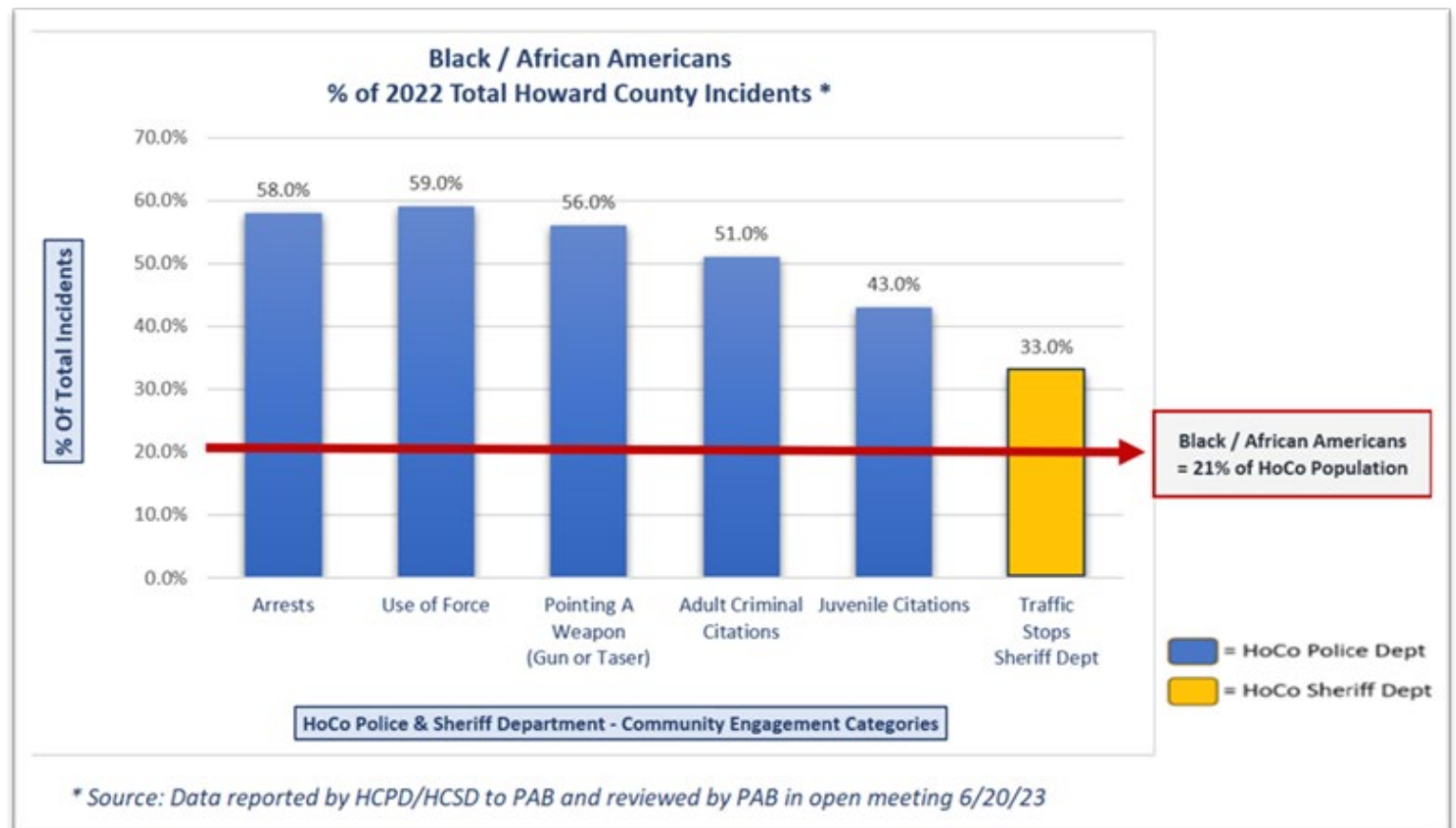
- to ensure that the LEAs/County Government effectively address the racial disparities in policing arising in all categories of officer engagement with the public. This would start with a third-party independent study.*
- to request 2023 LEA data on officer engagements with the public covering the same data as requested for 2022.*
- to summarize the 2022 and 2023 data (when received), including racial demographics, in an accurate and effective manner and make that summary available to the public.*
- to advocate for County legislation to establish a legal requirement for the LEAs to periodically report and publish information, including demographic data, on officer engagements with the public.*
- to advance the policy recommendations, and engage with the LEAs on the other policy issues, which were voted and/or agreed by the PAB in June 2023.*
- to advocate to formalize a right in LEA policy and County legislation, for PAB members to have access (not subject to LEA discretion) to LEA data, records and recordings*
- to build public trust as an independent stakeholder ensuring police accountability, including effective engagement with the community.*
- to establish, with LEA leadership, a set of key metrics for tracking and measuring accountability and transparency in policing*

HoCo LEA Racial Disparities

2022 Officer Engagement With Black/African Americans (Across Multiple Categories)

There exists **significant racial disparities** across several categories of 2022 LEA officer engagements with Black/African Americans.

The question is **WHY?**



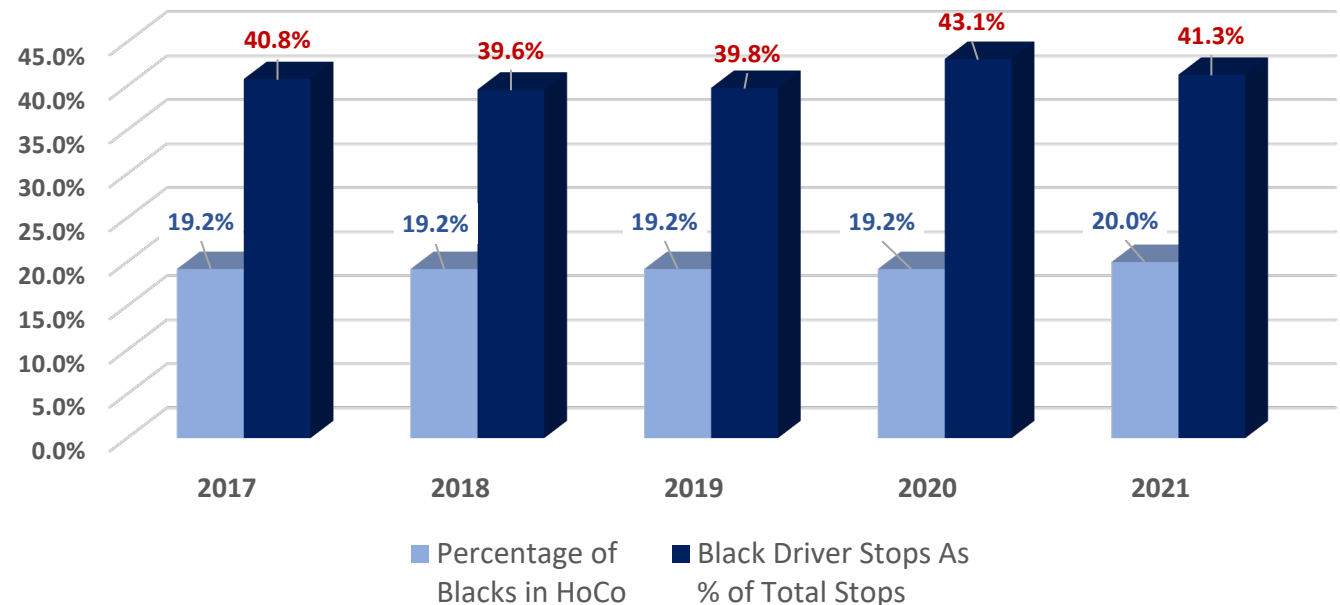
HoCo LEA Racial Disparities

Black Driver Traffic Stop Data Over Past FIVE YEARS

- **Black driver traffic stops** over 5-year period **significantly disproportionate** with demographic representation
- HCPD postulated disparity may be attributed to large number of Black drivers from outside HoCo
- Our cursory analysis shows that this single factor cannot explain away the disparity. ⁽¹⁾

**Black Drivers Being Stopped 2X
Demographic Representation... WHY?**

Analysis of HoCo PD
Black Driver Traffic Stops *
(2017 - 2021)



* Source: HCPD data (2017 - 2021) on the Maryland Race-Based Traffic Stop Dashboard

⁽¹⁾ Visit PATF-HoCo Website for more details about our analysis of the traffic stop data... www.PATF-HoCo.com

Police Accountability Task Force of Howard County (PATF-HoCo)



- Long-term Howard County residents
- Joined together Summer of 2020 after murder of George Floyd
- Organized to address issues and concerns around racial inequality and disparities in policing in Howard County
- Key Campaigns & Accomplishments
 - Body Worn Camera (BWC) Program
 - Police Accountability Board Legislation
 - LEA Racial Disparity Project (Current)

Our Highly Valued Coalition Partners



ACLU-Maryland	African American Coalition of Howard County	African American Community Roundtable	Chinese American Network for Diversity & Opportunity	Columbia Democratic Club
Howard County Citizen's Association	Howard County Coalition for Immigration Justice	Indian Origin Network of Howard County	IndivisibleHoCoMD	Our Revolution Howard County
Progressive Democrats of Howard County	Progressive Maryland	Silver Spring Justice Coalition		

The Police Accountability Task Force of Howard County (PATF-HoCo)



Response To The 2024 Howard County Police Accountability Board Annual Report

March 11, 2025

Introduction

The **Howard County Police Accountability Board's (PAB) 2024 Annual Report** presents a misleading and overly favorable assessment of the board's performance. While the report purports to highlight achievements and general oversight efforts, it **fails to acknowledge and address critical shortcomings** that directly impact public accountability and transparency in policing by the Howard County Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs). Based on an independent review of the PAB's legal responsibilities, its public statements, and its 2024 Annual Report, PATF-HoCo¹ has identified significant **discrepancies between the report's claims and the PAB's actual actions—or lack thereof.**

1. Lack of Accountability for Addressing Racial Disparities

The PAB **has been aware since as early as June 2022 of persistent racial disparities in policing** and has taken no effective actions to address them. These disparities include disproportionate rates of arrests, traffic stops, and use of force against African Americans in Howard County. The PAB's **2024 Annual Report glosses over this issue** by failing to:

- **Acknowledge its lack of effective action** on the racial disparities reported in 2022.
- **Report on any 2023 LEA data on officer engagements with the public** (not otherwise legally required to be disclosed by LEAs), which the PAB **failed to even request from the LEAs.**
- **Note that any engagement by the PAB with the LEAs did not determine or establish a means to determine** the root causes of these racial disparities.
- **Note the PAB's failure throughout 2024 to effectively follow through on its own 2023 recommendation** to commission a third-party study of the racial disparities.

This **lack of initiative and effective follow-through** directly contradicts the PAB's legal mandate to promote **transparency and accountability** in policing. Instead of owning up to this failure, the annual report **obscures the issue entirely**, undermining the very purpose of the board.

2. Failure to Follow Through on Policy Recommendations

In 2023, the PAB voted on and **endorsed several policy recommendations** aimed at improving police accountability and community trust. However, the 2024 Annual Report **fails to mention** that:

- The PAB (i) failed to adequately advocate for some of its 2023 recommendations and (ii) failed to even bring up some of its 2023 recommendations for discussion with the LEAs.

¹ *The Police Accountability Task Force of Howard County (PATF-HoCo) is a group of Howard County residents that has brought together a number of partner groups in a coalition representing a wide cross-section of Howard County citizens who support police accountability and transparency.*

- The PAB did not take any action to advocate for county legislation requiring law enforcement agencies to **regularly report racial and demographic data** on police interactions.
- The PAB did not **engage law enforcement leadership** in developing key accountability metrics, despite agreeing to do so in 2023.

By omitting these critical failures, the PAB's annual report presents an **inaccurate portrayal of progress**.

3. Misleading Presentation of Community Engagement Efforts

An effective PAB should **engage with the public and community stakeholders** to foster transparency. However, the PAB's engagement in 2024 was **insufficient and ineffective**:

- The PAB is **legally required** to meet with community youth representatives at least **twice per year**—yet in 2024, it **only had one such meeting**.
 - The annual report **fails to disclose this noncompliance**, instead listing general community engagement activities that lack real impact.
 - The annual report provides no details on the PAB's community engagement nor about how that engagement has led to meaningful actions that benefit the community, especially those most affected by policing disparities. The report **frames the PAB's weak engagement as a success**, misleading the public about its actual community impact.
-

Conclusion & Call to Action

The **Howard County PAB's 2024 Annual Report fails to accurately reflect its performance** and instead presents a **misleading narrative** that ignores its **noncompliance, inaction, and failure to hold law enforcement accountable**. PATF-HoCo reported similar disappointing PAB performance in 2023. Given the continued decline in PAB performance, PATF-HoCo recommends the following:

1. **The immediate resignation of PAB Chair Nellie Hutt**, given her leadership role in this ongoing systemic failure.
 2. **That a process for PAB appointments be put into place requiring the County Executive to publicly post such openings and provide the public an opportunity to submit and advocate for PAB candidates.**
 3. **An immediate commitment from the PAB to fulfill its legal responsibilities to ensure police accountability and transparency**, including:
 - Engaging effectively with LEAs and County leadership to drive its recommendation of a third-party study of the racial disparities.
 - Regularly requesting and reporting racial disparity data from LEAs.
 - Conducting meaningful public engagement.
 - Following through on policy recommendations.
-

“Howard County remains proud of our safety record and the enforcement efforts of our police in the community. However, our Police Accountability Board works hard to ensure our officers and command structure operate fairly and openly and are held responsible for their actions and decisions as appropriate. I encourage residents to apply who want to work with our Board to help advance that we are safe and feel safe in Howard County.”⁽¹⁾

Dr. Calvin Ball

Howard County Executive

February 28, 2025

⁽¹⁾ www.HowardCountyMD.gov/News022825