



HB 493 SUPPORT

HB 493 creates a framework for the release of law-enforcement disciplinary records related to complaints that do not represent mere "technical infractions."

VCOG supports this bill, which is a recommendation of the FOIA Council.

VCOG supports bringing transparency to the completed investigations of both founded and unfounded complaints against police officer when those complaints relate to public interactions in the course of their official duties.

We feel it is the best way for the public to hold officers accountable for conduct that does not rise to the level necessitating decertification but that is nonetheless inappropriate and deserving of scrutiny.

Inappropriate conduct undermines trust in law enforcement, which is why transparency is also beneficial to the police. An open-book demonstrates to the public the good works of law enforcement and that departments take misconduct seriously.

Heightened scrutiny of police officer misconduct is needed not because law enforcement officers are somehow more poorly behaved than other government employees. It is because law enforcement officers have enormous power over all citizens with the authority to deprive of us our liberty and even our life. With great power comes great need for oversight.

Please contact Megan Rhyne (540-353-8264 or mrhyne@opengovva.org) with questions.