



National Police Association
8710 Bash Street #501692
Indianapolis, IN 46250
NationalPolice.org

To Members of the Florida House Judiciary Committee,

January 9, 2024

[The National Police Association](#) would like to register in support of *Complaints Against Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers* (HB 601), introduced by Rep. Wyman Duggan.

It would prohibit local, county, and special government units from investigating complaints against police officers; and from passing rules, ordinances, and resolutions on police misconduct. As a result, local governments would be unable to establish civilian oversight committees.

Although Florida's civilian oversight boards are currently legally disallowed from imposing penalties on police officers, they are able to offer policy recommendations and conduct procedural investigations. Civilian review board appointees too often hold an anti-police bias and a weak grasp of the rigors and legal aspects associated with police work. Making recommendations based on these criteria harms police morale, and it can generate unfounded narratives that damage police-community relations. There is also little policy coherence within Florida's 21 citizen review boards, so officers are subjected to arbitrary rules.

The state of Florida already provides independent oversight and investigation of law enforcement officers via multiple government agencies, including the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Florida Attorney General, and the U.S. Department of Justice. Within this framework, officers accused of malfeasance are robustly investigated using a set of uniform, legal standards. This process allows for transparency and accountability while providing officers with their Constitutional right to due process of law.

Citizens with concerns about law enforcement would still have opportunities to exercise their First Amendment rights via venues like public government meetings -including those held by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement- and by petitioning their elected officials.

HB 601 establishes a fair, uniform standard that protects an officer's Constitutional right to due process. The multiple layers of government oversight are designed to provide a reliable level of transparency and accountability, without subverting a citizen's First Amendment rights.

For these reasons, we urge the Florida legislature to pass *Complaints Against Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers* (HB) 601.

Thank you for your time.

About The National Police Association: The National Police Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit Educational/Advocacy organization. For additional information visit www.nationalpolice.org.