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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Frosh Files Complaint Seeking Court Order to Restrain Harford County from Interfering with Fatal Shooting Investigation

BALTIMORE, MD (April 25, 2022) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today filed a complaint requesting, among other things, a temporary restraining order to stop the Harford County Sheriff’s Office from interfering with the investigation of the Office of the Attorney General’s Independent Investigations Division into the fatal police-involved shooting that occurred in Forest Hill on April 23.

In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly created an independent unit within the Attorney General’s Office, called the Independent Investigations Division (IID), to investigate all police-involved fatalities in the state. Local law-enforcement agencies are required by law to cooperate with the IID’s investigations.

As detailed in the [documents filed today](#), the Harford County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) notified the Independent Investigations Division on April 23 that two of its deputies had shot and killed a civilian. IID investigators, along with the Maryland State Police (MSP) homicide unit and forensic sciences unit, began arriving within 40 minutes to process the crime scene, collect evidence, and interview witnesses.

At the scene, the HCSO refused to allow the Maryland State Police Forensic Sciences Unit – an independent body – to collect the evidence in this case, in accordance with the IID’s standard protocols. The HCSO insisted instead that its own employees collect the evidence. The HCSO did not begin collecting that evidence until after MSP evidence technicians were present and available to do so in a reliable, independent manner. That evidence has not been provided to the IID in the two days since the fatality occurred.

The HCSO also refused to provide copies of any video footage of this incident to the Independent Investigations Division. That video includes the body-worn cameras of the involved and witness officers, as well as dashboard cameras and additional video from non-law-enforcement sources. Having copies of those videos for analysis is crucial to conducting an independent investigation. The HCSO’s proposed alternative—that the IID review the videos only under HCSO supervision—is antithetical to an independent investigation.

Within the last month, the General Assembly passed, and Governor Hogan signed into law, a bill to provide additional protections against the types of interference occurring in this case. The law (Ch. 141) will become effective July 1. Even before the new law becomes effective, the Attorney General may obtain all of the standard forms of injunctive relief, including the temporary restraining order filed today.

Attorney General Frosh has released the following statement about the fatal incident and its investigation:

“The Sheriff’s Office is interfering with the Division’s investigation in this case. This interference with an independent investigation is in violation of the law. The people of Maryland deserve better, and we will fight to see that they get it.”

We ask that anyone with information about this investigation contact the Office of the Attorney General’s Independent Investigations Division at (410) 576-7070.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2022/042522b.pdf>