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—
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Chair, Oversight Committee on Pensions

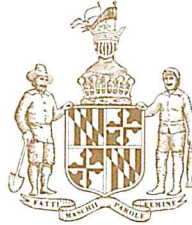
Public Safety and
Administration Subcommittee

—
Joint Audit Committee

House Chair
Joint Committee on Cybersecurity,
Information Technology and
Biotechnology

Joint Committee on Fair Practices
and State Personnel Oversight

Joint Committee on Pensions



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 659
Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System - Benefits

Delegate Michael A. Jackson

February 18, 2020

Chairwoman McIntosh, and Honorable members of the House Appropriations Committee:

House Bill 659 increases the normal service retirement benefit multiplier for members of the pension plan in the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System (LEOPS), from 2.0% to 2.5%, for creditable service earned after June 30, 2020. The bill also raises the cap on LEOPS normal service retirement benefit payments from 65% of average final compensation (AFC) to 70% of AFC.

While there are many compelling justifications to support House Bill 659, perhaps the most glaring reason can be summed up in one word, PARITY. Simply put, two organizations, doing the same thing, under the same pension system, but receiving two starkly different retirement packages. This practice would not be acceptable under any other public domain and protected with fair labor standards.

The State Pension system provides equity within every other membership type. For instance, all teachers receive the same pension, the same goes for state employees and judges. This cannot be said for law enforcement. Thus, if enacted, HB 659 would eliminate that disparity and be of a greater benefit to the law enforcement community. I respectfully request this committee's favorable report.