



Maryland Transportation Authority Police Lodge #34



President
James Kruszynski III



Lodge Attorney
Herbert Weiner

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Senator Guy Guzzone Chair
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

January 31, 2023

**RE: Senate Bill 139 -State Police Retirement System and Law Enforcement Officers'
Pension System - Deferred Retirement Option Program - Alterations (SUPPORT)**

Dear Senator Guzzone and Distinguished Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

Maryland Transportation Authority Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Lodge 34 strongly supports Senate Bill 139. FOP Lodge 34 represents the brave men and women of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police which is the largest agency in the Law Enforcement Officers Pension System (LEOPS).

Senate Bill 139 extends our Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) from a maximum of 5 years to a maximum of 7 years. This extension not only provides a DECREASE in financial liabilities and contributions for the State, it also provides some relief to Police agencies who are experiencing record numbers of early retirements by qualified veteran Officers which is contributing to record high Police Officer vacancies across the State. It's imperative that we equip our Police Agencies with competitive pension and benefit options in a effort to attract the best qualified applicants in an ever dwindling applicant pool. This small adjustment to our DROP program will provide LEOPS agencies a big step in that direction.

Therefore, on behalf of the almost 600 members of Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 34, I thank you for your support and your FAVORABLE report on Senate Bill 139.

Sincerely,

Jim Kruszynski
President
Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 34