

Senate Bill# 126 (Judicial Proceedings) - Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission - Police Officer Certification – Eligibility - AKA “Freedom to Serve” Bill.

I write in **support** of SB 126. This is a modest change, that should achieve broad consensus in the Assembly. First, let’s go over a few things this bill does **not** do. It does **not** change or lower physical fitness requirements of police officers. **Nor** does it lower test/admittance scores. It does **not** allow “undocumented” persons from qualifying as police officers. In summary, it does **not**, in any way “lower the bar” or lower the standards for becoming a police officer in the State of Maryland.

What does it do? It **allows** our residents, who have **legally** and **honorably** served our country in the Military, and opportunity to continue their service in Maryland police forces without interruption. “Green Card” holders AKA Permanent Residents, have followed our laws, applied for permission, read our rules, and are **lawfully** here in Maryland with authorization to work.

This Bill will provide a tool in the recruitment toolbox of Police Departments to draw candidates from a broader, more diverse group of applicants and can better reflect the communities that are being policed. This Bill is a rare win/win for folks on both sides of the isle, and I strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 126.

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