

Mr. Chairman, and honorable members of the Committee

I am John Turrall, a retired Maryland State Trooper. On behalf of myself and other retirees that are faced with an upcoming loss of coverage to our prescription drug plan.

I entered the Maryland State Police (MSP) when I was 22 years old, a recent veteran of the United States Coast Guard, an expecting wife, working a night job at a gasoline station and attempting to earn a college degree. The MSP was actively recruiting personnel to fill new openings at the future JFK highway, and I needed a job.

The years passed and my wife & I enjoyed raising three children, sometimes using the medical benefits provided by our employer – State of Maryland. There were child diseases and a few broken bones, but they grew, married and raised their own families. My wife and I are now older, I'm 83 and she is 80, we have some the age-related medical problems. We joke with each other and our social friends that if wasn't for doctors we wouldn't have a social life.

We have serious concerns over our Prescription Drug Plan that was promised to each of us when we entered the law enforcement field. Now the plan will come to an end in Fiscal Year 2024. This will mean that all retirees, 65 and older, will have to obtain Medicare Part D and supplemental insurance. (SOME CANNOT) Again, we were promised this prescription plan for life.

The Maryland State Police retirement system is not in any way connected with the U.S. Government retirement system. This means that a retired member of the Maryland State Police, hired before the 1990's, has never paid into the U.S. Social Security system to gain any benefits through Medicare Part D. Our members may have earned some minimal benefits through the military or working part time through private employers.

The issue of having a pre-existing medical condition when signing up for a new Rx insurance is often cost prohibitive and can be financially devastating. Many medications currently being taken may not be available unless there is a generic substitute, meaning the drug can only be obtained at an out-of-pocket cost.

Please understand that many of our retirees are living on a limited income. For many of us our retiree benefits are but a small fraction of the folks that retire today.

“To Protect the citizens of Maryland” was our motto. We answered the call for over twenty-five years, from domestic disturbances, assaults, to accidents, all for the citizens of Maryland. We sustained physical and mental stress on our bodies in adverse conditions. Now we ask for your hand and voice to help us secure our Prescription Drug Plan. Thank you for your time and consideration.

John Turrall
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