

JOHNNY RAY SALLING
Legislative District 6
Baltimore County

Budget and Taxation Committee
Public Safety, Transportation,
and Environment Subcommittee



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 321
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3587 · 301-858-3587
800-492-7122 Ext. 3587
JohnnyRay.Salling@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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

February 19, 2026

To the Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on Senate Bill 491 - Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System - Military Service Credit Eligibility.

This bill allows a member or vested former member of the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System (LEOPS) to earn military service credit toward their retirement pension, correcting a clear fairness issue in our retirement system.

Under current law, individuals who receive retirement benefits from the National Guard or the Reserves are already eligible for this service credit. However, other military retirees with comparable service are excluded. This inequity was first brought to my attention by State Police helicopter pilots who are members of LEOPS and work side-by-side with colleagues who have already received this benefit.

This legislation also has the added benefit of equalizing treatment for individuals we actively want to recruit and retain into state service—individuals who often bring critical, highly specialized skills and experience that are in short supply. It also addresses critical staffing shortages in key public safety roles and ensuring that our retirement system supports our ability to attract and retain qualified professionals.

As introduced, we have limited this military services credit to LEOPS, but when the budget improves in future years, we hope that we might be able to extend this benefit to even more employees in other retirement systems to address these same issues there.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would urge a favorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Johnny Ray Salling".

Senator Johnny Ray Salling