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SB 654 B&T 03-05-2026 - SLEOLA - UNF.pdf

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**State Law Enforcement
Officers Labor Alliance**
542 Ritchie Highway
Severna Park, Maryland 21146



March 5, 2026

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: SB 654 – State Police Retirement System – Mandatory Retirement Age – Alteration
Oppose**

Dear Chair Guzzone:

The State Law Enforcement Labor Alliance (SLEOLA) is the exclusive representative for 1,757 active state law enforcement officers including the Maryland State Police. We are writing in opposition to Senate Bill 654.

SLEOLA surveyed its membership regarding an increase in the mandatory retirement age requirement, and the majority of our members expressed opposition to raising the mandatory age to 62. The current mandatory retirement age of 60 facilitates opportunities for younger applicants to join the Department, thereby introducing fresh perspectives, energy, and greater adaptability to new technologies and evolving policing strategies. The Department must continuously adapt to address shifts in societal expectations, public concerns, crime trends, and technology. A younger workforce ensures that the Department remains dynamic and responsive to these challenges. Furthermore, a consistently renewed workforce promotes diversity and inclusivity, as younger applicants often reflect contemporary social and cultural trends. The younger segment of the workforce also continues to contribute to the retirement system, as troopers cease paying into the system after 28 years of service.

States in our region have similar mandatory retirement ages for their state police: Delaware and New Jersey set their mandatory retirement age at 55; New York State Police and Pennsylvania have a retirement age of 60. The federal government has a lower mandatory retirement age than Maryland State Police: federal law enforcement officers must retire at 57 years of age or as soon as they complete 20 years of service. Individual federal law enforcement officers can receive exemptions from the mandatory retirement age up to age 60 if the President issues an executive order. Federal Capitol Police officers also have a mandatory retirement age of 57.

For these reasons, SLEOLA urges the Committee to give SB 654 an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

Brian Gill
President

cc: Members, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

SB 654_HB 1020_ State Police Retirement System -

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: UNF

SB 654/HB 1020: State Police Retirement System - Mandatory Retirement Age -
Alteration: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Budget & Taxation Committee and Appropriations Committee:

I am writing to express concerns about **SB 654/HB 1020**.

I fully support the goals of this legislation: retaining experienced Maryland State Police officers longer to preserve institutional knowledge, maintain high levels of expertise, and help address ongoing staffing and recruitment challenges. **The value of seasoned troopers—who bring years of training, situational judgment, and proven performance—cannot be overstated, especially in a time when the agency faces shortages and complex public safety demands.** Public safety must remain the highest priority.

Instead of raising the mandatory retirement age, **I believe Maryland should explore targeted, voluntary incentives**—such as enhanced retention bonuses, flexible reassignments to less physically demanding roles for willing older officers, or expanded lateral transfer and recruitment efforts—**to keep experienced personnel engaged longer without lowering the safety threshold for active-duty troopers.**

I urge you to **vote against SB 654/HB 1020** in its current form and work toward alternative solutions that achieve the goal of retaining talent while preserving the rigorous physical standards required of Maryland State Police officers.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of my concerns regarding this important public safety and law enforcement issue.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals