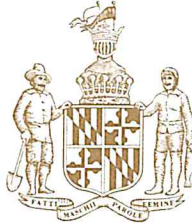


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Joint Committee on Fair Practices
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Joint Committee on Pensions

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 778
HB 778 – Correctional Officers' Retirement System - Membership
Appropriations

Delegate Michael A. Jackson

February 27, 2020

Madame Chair and members of the Appropriations Committee. HB 778, with amendment, would add the Department of Juvenile Services' Case Management Specialists I, II, III and Supervisor to the Correctional Officers Retirement System (CORS). I am amending this bill due to a bill drafting error – I will spare the committee the details, but the bottom line is that adding the Case Management Specialists was the original intent of the legislation.

As you may remember in 2018 we added a number of DJS and DPSCS job titles to the Correctional Officers' 20-year retirement system. DJS Case Management Specialists were left out of this eligibility, and this legislation seeks to remedy that.

The 20-year retirement system was established to recognize that there are jobs in our state that are so stressful, they actually can take years off your life. In this instance, DJS Case Management Specialists – and don't let the title fool you – are the DJS version of Parole & Probation Agents. The skills, training, licensing, and day-to-day work are very similar to Parole & Probation Agents. But those agents get a 20-year retirement benefit, and these Case Management Specialists do not.

Case Management Specialists visit juvenile offenders in their homes and communities. The juvenile offenders may have gang connections. There are often issues of social and impulse control. It can be a dangerous job.

In addition, they often have to work evenings and weekends, traveling statewide to meet with clients, families, the courts, law enforcement and juvenile residential facilities. They need to monitor their clients, and come up with plans for rehabilitation and education, often working with community stakeholders.

It is a tough job, and hard to recruit and retain employees. Adding this job title to CORS should help with recruitment and retention. I respectfully request a favorable report of HB 778 with amendments.