



State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance

Senator Sarah Elfreth
Chair, Pension Subcommittee
Budget, and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB – 115 – Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System – Benefits SUPPORT

Dear Senator Elfreth and distinguished members of the committee:

I am Veronica Bruns, a Corporal with the Maryland Natural Resources Police, and the Treasurer of the State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance (SLEOLA) which is the exclusive representative for approximately 1,800 active law enforcement officers. This includes eight agencies which are affected by Senate Bill 115: Maryland Natural Resources Police, Field Enforcement Bureau, Maryland State Fire Marshall, Maryland Capital Police, Department of Health Police, Maryland Vehicle Administration Police, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Intelligence and Investigative Division, and the Warrant Apprehension Unit of the Division of Parole and Probation in the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 115. Recruiting and retention continues to be a struggle in our state for all law enforcement agencies. In the past five years, an overwhelming number of agencies have seen recruitment drop from several thousand applicants, to barely several hundred. In order to recruit and retain the most qualified law enforcement candidates, agencies must be competitive with their benefits package.

Senate Bill 115 will increase the multiplier for years of credible service from 2.0% to 2.5%. This will allow members of the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System to retire with a maximum of 70% benefit at 28 years of service instead of the current maximum 65% benefit at 32.5 years of credible service. Under the current benefit package of LEOPS members who retire at twenty-five years only receive 50% of their salary, while those members of SLEOLA in the Maryland State Police who are in the State Police Retirement System receive 63.75% of their salary with the same years of service.

This adjustment under Senate Bill 115 will allow the other eight agencies SLEOLA represents to receive parity with the Maryland State Police who already receive 2.55% for every year of service and achieve their maximum benefit of 71.4% at 28 years of service.

Therefore, on behalf of the State Law Enforcement Labor Alliance, I would like to thank the sponsor of this bill and would ask the committee for favorable support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Veronica Bruns
Treasurer