

JHEANELLE WILKINS
Legislative District 20
Montgomery County

PARLIAMENTARIAN

Ways and Means Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 350
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3493 · 301-858-3493
800-492-7122 Ext. 3493
Fax 410-841-3445 · 301-858-3445
Jheanelle.Wilkins@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 1, 2022

Pensions and Retirement - Forfeiture of Benefits - Law Enforcement Officers

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present **House Bill 123 Pensions and Retirement - Forfeiture of Benefits - Law Enforcement Officers**, which would establish that law enforcement officers are subject to forfeiture of benefits in whole or in part from the State Retirement and Pension System or a local pension system when they are found guilty of a felony, perjury, or misdemeanor related to truthfulness.

The only forfeiture provisions currently applicable to the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System are limited to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, Treasurer, Secretary of State, as well as members of the General Assembly. Should they be convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor, they are required to forfeit pension benefits. House Bill 123 seeks to extend these provisions to law enforcement officers as well.

The absence of pension forfeiture laws in Maryland has allowed for convicted former law enforcement officers to retain their benefits, a large percentage of which is funded by tax-payers. It has also shielded convicted officers from fully facing the consequences of breaking the law they were sworn to uphold. This legislation will ensure that convicted law enforcement officers are fully held accountable for their crimes; and lower the levels of police misconduct in Maryland as it would serve as a significant deterrent to misconduct within the system.

HB 123 will hold convicted law enforcement officers fully accountable for their crimes by forfeiting taxpayer funded pension benefits. As an essential part of the overdue policing overhaul we are working on in Maryland, I urge the committee to give a **favorable** report for **House Bill 123**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jheanelle Wilkins".

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins