

Written testimony HB240 Correctional Officers' Retirement System  
- Special Death Benefits – Applicability

Appropriations Committee- 3-16-23 1 pm

Letter of Support

Good morning Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Darryl Webster; I am a Commissioner for Somerset County District 2 and retired Maryland Division of Corrections employee with 30 years of service. I am also a friend of the Collins family and I am here in support of House Bill 240.

I met Officer Gregory Collins in 1998 at Eastern Correctional Institution where we were both employed. I was a supervisor on the same shift as Greg. He and I were both on the Tactical Team. Greg was just the type of person you knew you could count on, and that was very important to me..... Over time we became friends.

3 short years after being hired at ECI, on June 4, 2001, Greg was found shot and killed in his pickup truck not far from his family home in Vienna, Maryland..... For 18 years the case went unsolved. ....Think about this for a minute, married just over 3 years, husband murdered, infant child, not knowing who or why..... Had to be extremely stressful and downright terrifying for Greg's wife Lena and the entire family.

For quite some time his bullet riddled truck sat at the Maryland State Police Barracks in Easton and when in the area I would look at his truck

and just think “somebody has to know something, they just aren’t talking”.

Finally, a suspect was identified and arrested for Greg’s murder..... The suspect was tried and found guilty of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree murder along with other charges, and is now serving life without the possibility of parole..... The suspect was a member of the DMI gang and committed the murder for reasons associated with the gang.

On October 8, 2021 Anne Harvey, Acting Commissioner of Corrections, officially declared the death of Officer Gregory Collins a line of duty death.

There is so much more to this case I could say but my time is about up..... I think you all understand the significance of what we are pursuing here today.

In closing: Nearly 22 years have passed since Officer Collins was murdered and a lot has been learned by the family and those of us close to them.....We thank you for your time and consideration and we are asking for a favorable decision for House Bill 240.