

Good morning Chair Jackson and members of the Budget and Taxation Pension Subcommittee.

My name is Darryl Webster, 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 Senate Bill 244.

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 and we became friends. Greg was just the type of person you knew you could count on, which is very important in corrections.

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. 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 1st and 2nd 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.

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 Senate Bill 244.