

SB 18 West FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Christopher West

Position: FAV

CHRIS WEST
Legislative District 42
Baltimore and Carroll Counties

Judicial Proceedings Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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January...2023

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
2 East Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Senate Bill – 18 – Police Retention Workgroup

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

Governor Moore has announced that public safety will be one of his top priorities. One of the crucial public safety issues at the moment is the fact that virtually every police department in the State is experiencing a record rate of vacancies among their uniformed officers. As a result, Maryland has, in effect, defunded its police without even passing a bill to implement such a policy.

We heard testimony from the Chief of Police of Baltimore City recently in which he reported that the Baltimore City Police Department has 465 vacancies at the moment. I understand from the Baltimore County Fraternal Order of Police that the Baltimore County Police Department has about 225 vacancies at this time. Around the State, similar record-breaking vacancies can be observed at many police departments.

Perhaps you read the article in the Baltimore Sun this past Sunday reporting that U. S. District Court Judge James K. Bredar, who is overseeing the policing Consent Decree between the City and the federal Justice Department, announced that “insufficient staffing is the Police Department’s biggest obstacle to achieving compliance with the Consent Decree. Judge Bredar stated that “it’s essential” that the Police Department “stop the bleeding” in terms of its recruitment and retention.

Independently, we learned last year at the hearing of a bill in this Committee that very few of Baltimore City’s police officers live in the City. Indeed, I have heard that a very high percentage of Baltimore County’s police officers live in southern Pennsylvania because they can’t afford to live in Baltimore County. Further, for years, we have heard that many police officers work two jobs because they can’t afford to live on the salaries that they are paid by the police departments.

Senate Bill 18 sets up the police retention workgroup with a charge to identify and examine issues and factors potentially contributing to the decline in police retention statewide.

This workgroup will be comprised of public officials, experts, and community members to generate a well-rounded understanding of the issue.

The workgroup is charged with quantifying the number of police officers retiring annually, the number of cadets completing police academy training annually, the current salary ranges for police officers in Maryland along with the current benefits and pension programs available to police officers. In addition, the workgroup will examine current training requirements for police officers, recruitment techniques being used at this time, the criteria being used for promotion and the impact of current State and local laws on policing and police departments. I will be submitting a short amendment to this bill that will also direct the workgroup to draw conclusions as to why the current vacancy rates on police forces are so high and to make recommendations to the General Assembly of measures that should be adopted to make Maryland's police forces the best trained, most effective and most highly professional police forces in the region, if not in the nation,

Senate Bill 18 does its best to establish a truly balanced workgroup. It includes two State Senators, two Delegates, the Secretary of the Department of State Police, the Attorney General, the Public Defender, the President of the Maryland State's Attorneys Association, a representative of the ACLU, a representative of the Fraternal Order of Police, a person with expertise in the field of effective policing and a citizen appointed by the Governor. The bill also assigns to the Governor the responsibility of designating the chair of the workgroup.

As elected officials, we have a responsibility to enact policy that empowers our institutions of public safety to protect us in a legal and professional manner. Senate Bill 18 will better inform us on how to do so.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of Senate Bill 18 and will be more than happy to answer any follow-up questions the Committee may have.

MTA Favorable SB18 2-1-2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Jenna Massoni

Position: FAV



M a r y l a n d Troopers Association



INCORPORATED 1979

February 1, 2023

The Honorable Will Smith, Chair and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

RE: **SB18 - Police Retention Workgroup**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Troopers Association (MTA) has a membership strength of approximately 2,629 members of which 1,120 are active sworn Troopers involved in traffic and criminal enforcement throughout the State of Maryland.

Much like the rest of the country, in Maryland, police officer recruitment and retention is down. Applications to the Maryland State Police are down 33% over last year. This impacts every single aspect of our departments, our communities, and our state. While there are several factors that we have personally identified within the MD Troopers Association, we support the establishment of the Police Retention Workgroup to study issues and factors potentially contributing to the decline in police officer retention statewide.

The Maryland Troopers Association supports SB 18 and requests a favorable report.

Brian Blubaugh
President
Maryland Troopers Association

MCPA-MSA_SB-18-Police_Retention-Workgroup_Support

Uploaded by: Andrea Mansfield

Position: FWA



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William Smith, Jr., Chair and
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 1, 2023

RE: **SB 18 – Police Retention Workgroup**

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 18 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill establishes a Police Retention Workgroup to identify and examine issues and factors potentially contributing to the decline in police officer retention statewide.

Despite recent efforts at the State and local level, law enforcement agencies across the State are having difficulty retaining and recruiting officers. As introduced, SB 18 has representation from the General Assembly, State Police, Public Defender's, Maryland State's Attorney's Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the American Civil Liberties Union, and a citizen member; but no law enforcement agency leadership representation. As individuals who will be responsible for implementing initiatives to aid in recruitment and retention, MCPA and MSA respectfully requests that two representatives be added to the composition of the workgroup – one representative for MCPA and one representative for MSA.

MCPA and MSA support all efforts to expand the pool of eligible officers and retain those currently employed; and respectfully request to be represented as a part of this conversation. For this reason, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT SB 18 WITH AMENDMENTS** to add a representative from each organization.

SB 18 - SWA - MML.pdf

Uploaded by: Bill Jorch

Position: FWA



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 1, 2023

Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings

Bill: SB 18 - Police Retention Workgroup

Position: Support with Amendment

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports Senate Bill 18 with amendment, to add municipal police agency representation on the workgroup established in the bill. We expect the workgroup to provide valuable information that will lead to municipal police agencies recruiting and retaining top quality police officers. The bill establishes a workgroup with the task of examining factors that are contributing to the decline in police officer retention.

There are 89 municipal police agencies in Maryland and at some point there have been challenges with police officer recruitment and retention in every part of the State; this problem seems to be particularly pervasive at the moment. As the costs and risks to operate a police agency continue to rise, the issue of officer compensation is of the utmost importance; both in terms of running an efficient and effective municipal public safety program but also finding and developing the right officers.

There are more municipal police agencies than county and State agencies combined. As such MML requests that the committee consider our proposed amendment which has been submitted to the bill sponsor:

On page 2, after line 6 insert:

(9) THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE:

(i) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF A POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR AN URBAN MUNICIPALITY;

(ii) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF A POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR A RURAL MUNICIPALITY.

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The workgroup established in SB 18 is an appropriate vehicle to provide much needed information on policies and trends that municipal police agencies can use to continue providing critical public safety services. For these reasons the League respectfully requests that this committee provide a favorable report on House Bill 18 with the above amendment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Theresa Kuhns

Angelica Bailey Thupari, Esq.

Bill Jorch

Justin Fiore

Chief Executive Officer

Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

Director, Public Policy

Deputy Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

SB0018-JPR_MACo_SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FWA



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

Senate Bill 18

Police Retention Workgroup

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

Date: February 1, 2023

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 18 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill would establish a workgroup to study the issues and factors contributing to the decline in police officer retention statewide. MACo's amendment is merely to strengthen the body's membership.

Staffing shortages have created complications across many sectors but few pose a comparable and immediate threat the way law enforcement shortages do. Vacancies, in conjunction with the percentage of employees eligible for retirement, paint an even more disturbing picture of the crisis. Including law enforcement officers in this workgroup can only enhance the group's effectiveness and outcomes.

County law enforcement officers are on the ground every day facing these retention challenges head-on – they see the workforce shortages juxtaposed with the evolving needs and challenges of their communities. These day-to-day, lived experiences of law enforcement are the clearest lens to bring these issues into focus for a capable, diverse, and well-meaning workgroup of stakeholders.

For these reasons, Counties support SB 18, **with an amendment** to include in the workgroup a representative of a police department in a large county jurisdiction and a representative of a sheriff's department in a jurisdiction where the sheriff's department serves as the primary law enforcement agency.

Counties applaud the willingness to focus attention on recommendations to help solve this growing problem. Including county representatives in that process will ensure an effective outcome, based on professional experience. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for SB 18.

MSP Letter of Information.pdf

Uploaded by: Kathy Anderson

Position: INFO



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Section
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: February 1, 2023

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 18 **POSITION:** Letter of Information

BILL TITLE: Police Retention Workgroup

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation to establish the Police Retention Workgroup to study issues and factors potentially contributing to the decline in police retention statewide. The bill establishes the membership and requires the Department of State Police to staff the workgroup.

The membership of the Workgroup consists of 12 people. Only one member is a representative of a law enforcement agency and two members of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) or designated by the FOP. While the FOP represents local and municipal police agencies, the State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance represents state law enforcement officers. Additionally, this legislation requires information related to training, recruitment techniques, and minimum requirements for hire, yet there is no one on the workgroup other than the State Police and FOP that might have information on the topics. There are more than 150 police departments in Maryland and of those, 24 are sheriff's departments. They are not represented on this workgroup. The majority of the members of this workgroup are non-law enforcement and may not have any experience or information on the nine issues and factors identified in the bill.

The Workgroup shall identify and examine issues and factors potentially contributing to the decline in police officer retention statewide, including:

- (1) the number of police officers retiring annually;
- (2) the number of cadets completing police academy training annually;
- (3) current salary ranges for police officers statewide;
- (4) current benefits and pension programs available to police officers;
- (5) training hour requirements for police officers;
- (6) police training academy acceptance requirements;
- (7) recruitment techniques;
- (8) requirements for advancement within police departments; and
- (9) the impact of current State and local laws on policing and police departments.

There is another bill introduced this Session, Senate Bill 105, which also proposes a study of law enforcement compensation and benefits. The two bills are addressing the causes of under staffed police agencies focusing on similar but not all of the same items.