



Charles County Volunteer Firemen's Association, Inc.

Post Office Box #21, La Plata, Maryland 20646

March 7, 2023

Bill: HB 947 – Charles County - Property Tax - Credit for Volunteer Emergency Responders

Committee: House – Ways and Means

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary

Vice Chairwoman Wilkins, and Members:

On behalf of the 1200 men and women of the Charles County Volunteer Fire and EMS Departments, this letter is to express support for the passage of HB 947– Charles County - Property Tax - Credit for Volunteer Emergency Responders with amendments described below.

HB 947 enables the county government to grant, by law, a tax credit against the real property tax imposed on the owner–occupied residence of active or retired volunteer fire, rescue, or emergency medical services in Charles County, and their surviving unmarried spouses.

As written, HB 947 limits county government ability to provide the tax credit to those volunteers with federal adjusted gross income of \$50,000 or less. Our County Commissioners and the Charles County Delegation approved jointly that the income limit be \$250,000, as was originally requested. This change also brings the bill in line with the cross-file, SB 521, that currently includes an income limit of \$250,000.

We respectfully request that the income limit be increased to \$250,000 to allow the Commissioners more flexibility as we develop a local law to implement the credit once it is passed by the General Assembly. This increase will allow us to incentivize experienced career and volunteer fire and medical emergency responders employed in other jurisdictions to volunteer in our County, which is desperately needed.

Charles County relies 100% on volunteers for emergency fire response, and partially for emergency medical services. Given the role that our volunteers perform in the public safety of our County and the millions of dollars saved by these volunteers we believe this small credit against their real property tax liability is warranted. We encourage a favorable committee report on HB 947 with amendment. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support.


Richard E. Bowie

President

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