



FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA), the nation's largest non-partisan professional association representing federal law enforcement officers from 65 federal law enforcement agency, applauds the introduction of HB 508 and SB 435: Property Tax Credit – Disabled Law Enforcement Officers and Rescue Workers – Definition and Eligibility.

Disabled Federal Agents are not able to work in order to supplement their income like retirees so any financial relief they can receive is beneficial. We are aware of this same benefit being extended to all local law enforcement, i.e. county police, community college police, fire marshals, private university police and we ask the same courtesy be extended to those that sacrifice so much for our country. Unfortunately, inflation is climbing faster than the federal government can initiate cost of living expenses increases.

The inflation increase is based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which tracks both the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). Accordingly, BLS reported that the CPI-W rose 5.8 percent over the 12 months ending in August. COLAs for the past 10 years have averaged 1.7 percent, with increases ranging from zero in 2015 to 3.6 percent in 2011. The most recent year beneficiaries received a COLA of more than 5 percent was in 2008, when there was 5.8 percent increase.

Those federal law enforcement officers, who are often one-income households and live in MD tend to live in high priced areas of our state, are also feeling the sting of inflation that is stretching and stressing their resources.

With the historic increases in housing prices in many areas, placing home ownership out of reach for those that serve their community, HB 508 and SB 435: Property Tax Credit – Disabled Law Enforcement Officers and Rescue Workers – Definition and Eligibility would require counties and municipalities to define disabled federal agents for the purpose of eligibility for a county property tax credit currently only afforded to State laws enforcement officers mentioned above. This program would be fiscally neutral as it would be required to pass each individual county council before being administered under the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and allow first responders and educators to be able to afford the purchase of a home.

This bill, modeled after the MD Code, Tax - Property, § 9-210, would correct the wrong of not initially including federal agents and capitol police by requiring counties and municipalities to define federal agents' eligibility for the credit while removing some of the residency requirements in order to be eligible for this tax credit. Thus, paving the way to waive the property tax for disabled federal agents and capitol police who have been hurt in the line of duty.

FLEOA looks forward to working with you to ensure disabled federal agents and capitol police that worked to support and protect our communities are able to achieve the American dream of home ownership while being exempt in property taxes when at a time when that dream seems far out or reach for far too many. If we can be of any additional assistance, feel free to contact us at fleoa@fleoa.org.

Sincerely,

Matthew N. Silverman

President Chapter 45, Maryland
Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association

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OIG
Forest Service
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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