



House Bill 618

Police Recruitment and Retention Workgroup

Position: **FAV**

Date: **February 15, 2024**

To: **Appropriations**

The Caroline County Commissioners **SUPPORT** HB 618. This bill aims to address the pressing issue facing law enforcement agencies across Maryland, including our own county, when it comes to recruiting and retaining officers. As you are aware, recruiting and retaining qualified police officers has become increasingly challenging in recent years.

Caroline County, like many others, has experienced difficulties in maintaining adequate staffing levels within our law enforcement agencies. This shortage not only poses risks to public safety but also places significant strain on our existing officers who are tasked with fulfilling their duties amidst staffing shortages and increased demands. Ensuring the safety of our community is paramount to fostering trust, stability, and prosperity for all residents.

House Bill 618 proposes the creation of a comprehensive Workgroup tasked with identifying and examining the factors contributing to the decline in police recruitment and retention statewide. By bringing together key stakeholders, including representatives from law enforcement agencies, state agencies, community organizations, and advocacy groups, the Workgroup will be well-positioned to develop actionable recommendations to address these challenges.

The Commissioners believe House Bill 618 represents a vital opportunity to collaboratively address the recruitment and retention challenges facing law enforcement agencies in Caroline County and across the state. Therefore, the Commissioners respectfully urge your committee to issue a favorable report on HB 618.

Sincerely,

J. Travis Breeding, President