

WITNESS for HOUSE BILL 0646

Good afternoon, my name is Patricia Brennan, and I am currently an Anne Arundel County Reserve Police Officer. I'm here today to advocate that all volunteer Reserve/Auxiliary Officers standing be in parity with the current status of volunteer Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services currently listed in House Bill 0646.

It's undeniable when you look at the cost value analysis that volunteer Reserve/Auxiliary Officers saved the State/County just last year alone \$496,309.52 providing a huge savings to the overall budget.

The tax deduction is of major importance in the recruitment and retention of individuals in our organizations. During the last 2 years Anne Arundel Reserve Officers have participated in 28,111 hours of service that covered 221 events throughout the county. At current there are 38 active Reserve Officers, with 22 vacancies.

In this capacity the Reserve Officer program allows the full-time regular paid Anne Arundel County Police force to be actively engaged in serving and protecting the public.

The Anne Arundel County Reserve Officer program was established in 1982. This program was a way for civil minded individuals who could serve their community in a uniformed capacity to be of assistant to the Anne Arundel County Police force. Reserve Officers support the Police force in many areas such as traffic control, weather emergency call-outs, and unforeseen devastating tragedies. Reserve Officers also respond to local requests in support of community relations functions and events, for over 40 years.

The application process to become a Reserve Officer is an in-depth process. One has to submit paperwork for a background check, fingerprinting, and other requirements before completing the Civilian Academy, in preparation for starting both formal classroom, and on-the-job training in police procedures. After successfully completing the application process, and required training a Reserve Officer has to complete a minimal of 192 hours of service each year, with many Reserve Officers exceeding this minimal requirement. At times being a Reserve Officer is both stressful and physically demanding.

We are advocating that Reserve/ Auxiliary Officers organizations be given the same respect, benefits, and status as the volunteer Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical services listed in the current Senate Bill 108, be given.

~~Reserve Officers~~ want to be involved in supporting their community to make a difference. Thank you for your time and support for updating this bill.