

Senate Bill 329 HCDSU.pdf

Uploaded by: Barry Glassman

Position: FAV



HARFORD COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF'S UNION

PO Box 881, Bel Air, Maryland 21014

www.hcdsu.org

January 22, 2025

The Honorable Guy Guzzone,
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 329 – Law Enforcement Officer's Pension System – Benefits -SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Guzzone and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

The Harford County Deputy Sheriff's Union supports Senate Bill 329. We represent over 300 sworn deputies of the Harford County Sheriff's Office who serve each day to keep citizens safe in Harford County and Maryland.

Recruitment and retention continue to be a challenge for law enforcement agencies across Maryland jurisdictions. Although law enforcement candidates enter the profession for many reasons, the ability to attain a reliable pension benefit is certainly a primary consideration for candidates and current members of the LEOPS plan.

Senate Bill 329 changes the multiplier for years of credible service from 2.0% to 2.5%. LEOPS members who currently retire with 25 years of service qualify for 50% of their salary while members of the Maryland State Police system receive 63.5% of their salary. Senate Bill 329 will allow LEOPS members to garner a comparable 2.55% yearly multiplier and maximum benefit of 71.4% similar to the benefit in the State Police Retirement System.

The Harford County Deputy Sheriff's Union is grateful for your continued efforts to examine and improve pension benefits for all of Maryland's law enforcement officers. We support Senate Bill 329 and request a FAVORABLE report.

Sincerely,
Gerald Eaton Jr
Gerald Eaton
Harford County Deputy Sheriff's Union

Senate Bill 329 Testimony .pdf

Uploaded by: Jim Kruszynski

Position: FAV



Maryland Transportation Authority Police Lodge #34



President
James Kruszynski III



Lodge Attorney
Herbert Weiner

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Senator Guy Guzzone Chair
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

January 28, 2025

RE: Senate Bill 329 -Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System - Benefits (SUPPORT)

Dear Senator Guzzone and Distinguished Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

Maryland Transportation Authority Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #34 strongly **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 329. Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 34 represents the men and women of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police, and we are the largest agency in the Law Enforcement Officers Pension System (LEOPS).

Senate Bill 329 increases the multiplier for years of credible service from 2.0% to 2.5%. This will allow members of the LEOPS system to retire with a 70% maximum benefit at 28 years of service as opposed to the current maximum of 65% at 32.5 years of service. Under the current benefit package, LEOPS members who retire at 25 years only receive 50% of their salary, while members of the State Police Retirement System receive 63.75%. This crucial adjustment to 2.5% per year will provide LEOPS members a fair and comparable benefit to the 2.55% per year that the State Police Retirement System currently offers its members.

Police agencies across Maryland are seeing record-high vacancy rates coupled with skyrocketing early retirement numbers. The MDTA Police are currently experiencing over a 15% vacancy rate.

Maryland Police agencies are desperately trying to recruit and retain qualified applicants to counter record-high vacancy rates by offering more competitive wages, pensions, and benefits packages. Unfortunately, LEOPS does not currently offer a competitive pension benefit compared to the State Police Retirement System. SB 329 will allow LEOPS Police Agencies the ability to offer competitive pensions and benefits packages, which will enhance our ability to recruit and retain the very best law enforcement officers.

Therefore, on behalf of the almost 600 members of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 34, I thank you for your support and your FAVORABLE report on Senate Bill 329.

Sincerely,

Jim Kruszynski
President
Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 34

SB329-2025TestimonySubmit.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Jackson

Position: FAV

MICHAEL A. JACKSON
Legislative District 27
Calvert, Charles and
Prince George's Counties



Annapolis Office
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Suite 3 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3700 • 301-858-3700
800-492-7122 Ext. 3700
Michael.Jackson@senate.state.md.us

Budget and Taxation Committee
Subcommittees
Pensions
Public Safety, Transportation, and
Environment

District Office
250 Merrimac Court
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 329
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' PENSION SYSTEM -
BENEFITS
BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE
JANUARY 30, 2025

Chair Hettleman and Fellow Committee Members:

Senate Bill 329 is a piece of legislation that makes a couple of changes to the current formulas in the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System. The bill raises the cap on retirement benefit payments from 65% to 70%, and it increases the retirement benefit multiplier from 2% to 2.5%.

As someone who spent the majority of his professional career in the public safety arena, this issue is very important to me. The changes proposed in this legislation would be a solid step to improve both recruitment and retention efforts for Maryland law enforcement agencies who are facing drastic shortages in applicants to fill positions.

This bill is a straightforward and modest effort to help level the benefit playing field for agencies that take part in the Law Enforcement Officers Pension System with both competing agencies and the private sector.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 329.

MCPA-MSA SB 329 Law Enforcement Officers Pension

Uploaded by: Samira Jackson

Position: FAV



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair and
Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee

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

DATE: January 30, 2025

RE: **SB 329 Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System - Benefit**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 329**. This bill increases the benefit multiplier from 2.0% to 2.5% for service earned on or after July 1, 2025 by members of the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System. Additionally, this bill increases the maximum benefit that certain retirees of the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System may receive from 65% to 70% of the member's average final compensation.

MCPA and MSA support this bill and believe that it exhibits a display of respect for the men and women to put their lives on the line to protect and serve their communities. The law enforcement profession is not an easy career path to take, but our officers show up every day and do their absolute best. This increase in our retirement benefit multiple is a well-received and much appreciated expression of appreciation for our public service work. In addition, this benefit increase may provide an incentive for people to enter and/or remain in this profession.

For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT SB 329** and urge a **FAVORABLE** committee report

SB 329 FAV SLEOLA 01-30-2025 B&T.pdf

Uploaded by: Veronica Bruns

Position: FAV



**State Law Enforcement
Officers Labor Alliance**
542 Ritchie Highway
Severna Park, Maryland 21146



January

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Budget & Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB 329 – Law Enforcement Officers’ Pension System – Benefits

Dear Chair Guzzone:

The State Law Enforcement Labor Alliance (SLEOLA) is the exclusive representative for 1,757 active state law enforcement officers, including the following Law Enforcement Officers Pension System agencies:

- Maryland Natural Resources Police
- Field Enforcement Bureau
- Maryland State Fire Marshall
- Maryland Capitol Police
- Department of Health Police
- Maryland Vehicle Administration Police
- Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Intelligence and Investigative Division
- Warrant Apprehension Unit of the Division of Parole and Probation in the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

SLEOLA is also the exclusive representative for the Maryland State Police, who are under the State Police Retirement and Pension System. We are writing in support of Senate Bill 329.

Recruiting and retention continues to be a struggle in our state for all law enforcement agencies. In the past five years, an overwhelming number of agencies have seen recruitment drop from several thousand applicants to barely several hundred. In order to recruit and retain the most qualified law enforcement candidates, agencies must be competitive with their benefit packages.

Senate Bill 329 will increase the multiplier for years of credible service from 2.0% to 2.5% under the Law Enforcement Officers’ Pension System (LEOPS). This will allow members of the pension system to retire with a maximum of 70% benefit at 28 years of credible service instead of the current maximum of 65% benefit at 32.5 years of credible service. Under the current benefit package of LEOPS, members who retire at 25 years only receive 50% of their salary, while members of the Maryland State Police in the State Police Retirement System receive 63.75% of their salary with the same years of service.

The adjustment proposed under Senate Bill 329 would allow eight of the agencies represented by SLEOLA to receive parity with the Maryland State Police who currently receive 2.55% for every year of service and achieve their maximum benefit of 71.4% at 28 years of service.

For these reasons, the State Law Enforcement Labor Alliance would like to thank the sponsor of this bill and ask the Committee for a favorable report for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Veronica Bruns
Treasurer

cc: Members, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee