

SB 768 CORS Membership Clarifications - Support.pd

Uploaded by: Anne Gawthrop

Position: FAV



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Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 768
Correctional Officers' Retirement System - Membership – Clarifications
Senate Budget and Tax Committee
February 27, 2025
9:00 A.M.

Anne Gawthrop
Director of Legislative Affairs
State Retirement Agency

The Board of Trustees for the State Retirement and Pension System wishes to express its support for Senate Bill 768, Correctional Officers' Retirement System - Membership - Clarifications. Senate Bill 768 is legislation sponsored by the Joint Committee on Pensions at the request of the Board.

Senate Bill 768 will move members who are employed by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) serving as supervisors or managers for security attendant positions at State forensic facilities from the Employees' Pension System (EPS) to the Correctional Officers' Retirement System (CORS). Chapters 135 and 136 of 2024 moved members from the EPS to the CORS who were employed by the MDH in security attendant positions at State forensic facilities. Individuals hired into these positions on or after July 1, 2024, at the facilities included in the 2024 legislation, will be enrolled in the CORS as a condition of employment. As Chapters 135 and 136 were drafted, many supervisor and manager positions for these security attendants were inadvertently omitted from the legislation. As a result, under current law, an individual serving in a security attendant position who is promoted into a supervisor or manager position that was omitted from the legislation, will be moved back to the EPS at the time of promotion. To avoid this disruption to these members' benefits, Senate Bill 768 clarifies that on or after July 1, 2025, the supervisors and managers of security attendants at State forensic facilities will also be members of the CORS as a condition of employment.

We appreciate being given this opportunity to express our support to the Budget and Tax Committee for this legislation and would request a favorable report on Senate Bill 768.

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SB 768_AFSCME3_FAV.pdf

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Patrick Moran – President

**SB 768 – Correctional Officers’ Retirement System – Membership –
Clarifications
Budget and Taxation Committee
February 27, 2025**

Position: FAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 strongly supports SB 768, which clarifies the inclusion of certain positions in the Correctional Officers’ Retirement System (CORS), as outlined in Chapters 135 and 136 of 2024. This legislation specifically addresses workers employed at Maryland’s forensic facilities within the Department of Health (MDH). Last year’s legislation established parity for staff at Perkins Hospital, aligning their benefits with those at other forensic facilities performing similar duties. SB 768 continues this important progression.

These positions are demanding and take a significant physical toll on workers. Granting these employees the opportunity to retire after 20 years of service is essential to ensuring they can retire with dignity. SB 768 is a crucial step forward, and we encourage the committee to issue a favorable report. Thank you.

The following states that have collective bargaining for state employees, AK, CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, ME, MN, NE, NJ, NM, NV, OH, OR, PA, MT, RI, WA have a terminal point for negotiations, either binding interest arbitration, the right to strike, or a legislative process. These processes create a level playing field for both parties.

This legislation would create a mutual incentive to compel parties to reach an agreement around collective bargaining negotiations by instilling a binding interest arbitration process, whereby if the two sides cannot come to agreement through negotiations by a specified deadline the proposals.

From the two sides would be presented to a professional, neutral third- party arbitrator – hearing from witnesses and experts, with data and evidence – for consideration of all the facts involved with the purpose of determining which proposal is most appropriate to implement. The choice by the arbitrator would then be considered a binding resolution to be implemented by the Governor and exclusive bargaining representative for whatever appropriations are necessary to implement and fund the memorandum of understanding. The budgetary powers of the Maryland General Assembly remain unaltered.

SB 188 is a strong and positive step toward enhancing fairness, balance, and efficiency, and resolution. It follows a model that is well-established in other states and among Maryland counties. We urge a favorable report.



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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TESTIMONY – SENATE BILL 768
CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM –
MEMBERSHIP - CLARIFICATIONS
BUDGET & TAXATION COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 27, 2025

Chair Hettleman and Fellow Committee Members:

Senate Bill 768 is a piece of clarifying legislation that adds a few employee classes within the Department of Health to the membership of the Correctional Officers' Retirement System.

These employees include Developmental Disability and Direct Care support staffers serving at several facilities including the Eastern Shore Hospital Center, the Thomas Finan Center, the Potomac Center/Secure Evaluation and Therapeutic Treatment Program, Spring Grove Hospital Center, Springfield Hospital Center, and the Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents.

This legislation is a simple means to the end of providing these critical staffers with this deserved benefit.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 768.