



Maryland Higher Education Commission
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Senate Bill 690
Higher Education - Scholarships for Correctional Officers
March 5, 2025

1:00 PM
Favorable

Good afternoon Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 690. Thank you to Senators Jack Bailey and Will Smith for sponsoring this legislation.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission is committed to expanding educational opportunities in Maryland by addressing financial aid needs of students. Senate Bill 690 seeks to expand educational assistance scholarships to include correctional officers.

A law enforcement scholarship for correctional officers is a vital investment in public safety, professional development, and workforce retention. Correctional officers play a critical role in maintaining order, rehabilitation, and security within the criminal justice system. Providing educational benefits through a dedicated scholarship program acknowledges their service while equipping them with the skills needed to enhance their effectiveness, leadership, and long-term career prospects.

By supporting higher education for correctional officers, this scholarship can improve job performance, reduce burnout, and promote retention in a field that struggles with high turnover rates. Access to degree programs in criminal justice, psychology, social work, and related fields can also help officers better address the complexities of inmate rehabilitation and crisis intervention. Furthermore, investing in their education strengthens the overall correctional system by fostering a more knowledgeable, skilled, and professional workforce.

This scholarship is not just a benefit to individual officers, but also a commitment to public safety and the continuous improvement of the correctional system. Maryland's ability to prioritize education will empower correctional officers to grow in their careers while enhancing the effectiveness and integrity of our justice system as a whole.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 690.