

JACK BAILEY
Legislative District 29
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Budget & Taxation Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 401
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3673 • 301-858-3673
800-492-7122 Ext. 3673
Jack.Bailey@senate.state.md.us

District Office
Dorsey Professional Park
23680 Three Notch Road, Unit 101
Hollywood, Maryland 20636
240-309-4238

March 5, 2025

Senate Bill 690 - Higher Education - Scholarships for Correctional Officers

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 690. This bill would expand eligibility for the Maryland Police Officers and Probation Agents Scholarship Program to include correctional officers.

In 2021, as part of the Maryland Police Accountability Act, the General Assembly created the Maryland Police Officers Scholarship Program. This program was created because of research which showed how higher education for police officers is beneficial to more than just the officer receiving the degree. A review of the research indicates that police officers who have graduated from college are less likely to be the subject of citizen complaints. In 2023, the General Assembly passed legislation to add probation agents to this scholarship program, and last year, we passed legislation allowing police officers and probation agents to use this scholarship at community colleges in addition to four-year institutions. I strongly believe in this scholarship program and have been working over the past several months with the Maryland Higher Education Commission on how to increase the utilization of this program through greater outreach to our State's police officers.

During the interim, I was approached by correctional officers in my district who shared with me that, as currently drafted, correctional officers are not included in the list of individuals who are eligible for the Police Officers and Probation Agents Scholarship Program. Therefore, I have introduced this bill to ensure that correctional officers are included in the program. At this time when recruitment and retention of public safety officers in all fields, including correctional officers, is so critical, this bill will aid in those efforts while also providing the State with the benefits that come with more correctional officers receiving a college education.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 690. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bailey", written over a horizontal line.

Senator Jack Bailey