



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Unit
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: January 30, 2025

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill: 351 **POSITION:** Oppose

BILL TITLE: Department of State Police – Residency Requirements

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation seeks to authorize sworn officers of the Department of State Police to reside outside of the state of Maryland. The bill also requires civilian appointees to live within the borders of this state.

Under current law, Maryland state troopers are required to be residents of the state of Maryland upon appointment. In addition, current law states the Secretary shall appoint the employees that the Secretary considers necessary for the efficient administration of the department in accordance with State Budget. Civilian employees may currently reside outside of the state of Maryland and maintain their residence throughout their state service.

Many of the operational policies established for State Troopers exist to allow rapid response of large numbers of personnel to sometimes sudden and unpredictable disasters, emergency situations or disorders. In part, this is the basis for permitting Troopers to take home police vehicles and their firearms. To be more specific, our policies support 24/7 availability with reliable transportation capable of immediate deployment on short notice anywhere in the State when necessary. History bears out the need for a State Police mobile field force such as the Baltimore Civil Unrest and the Key Bridge Disaster. Permitting residency outside Maryland complicates and hinders this basic philosophy and responsibility of the Maryland State Police.

Traveling to and from an out of state residence could create additional liabilities for the Department and the Trooper. It is because of the potential liabilities that the Department currently prohibits Troopers from carrying their duty weapon or driving their assigned vehicle when off duty and outside the State.

On the other hand, the state does not face the same liability concerns with civilian employees. There is no justification for restricting civilian staff to a state residency requirement. Imposing such a restriction could negatively impact the 7% (63 individuals) of current civilian employees who live out of state and would likely increase the vacancy rate. Moreover, enforcing a state residency requirement would make it harder to recruit and retain qualified civilian personnel.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of State Police urges the Committee to give Senate Bill 351 an unfavorable report.