



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 351:**

**Department of State Police - Residency Requirements**

TO: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: The Maryland Trooper's Association

DATE: January 29th, 2025

The Maryland Trooper's Association supports Senate Bill 351, which extends the residency requirements for law enforcement officers to 25 miles outside of the state.

Since the pandemic, recruitment for qualified police officers has been increasingly more difficult. [Maryland Matters reported last year](#) that jurisdictions such as Baltimore City and County are short nearly 600 and 235 officers, which carries a significant risk to public safety. There is much debate over the roots of the decline in applicants. Among the many reasons are housing affordability in Maryland, competition with nearby jurisdictions, several high-profile (but singular cases) that have impacted the image of law enforcement, and competitive pay in public sector positions. As stated in Maryland Matters, The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the median pay for police officers in Maryland was about \$76,000 in 2023, slightly ahead of the national average of \$74,910. However, education administrators had median wages of \$125,720 that year.

Regardless, Maryland needs to be creative in recruiting law enforcement officers. Senate Bill 351, which would allow an influx of talent from our neighboring states, is an excellent solution to address the issue. We strongly support Senate Bill 351 and urge a favorable report.

Brian Blubaugh  
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**Member of National Troopers Coalition**

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