



**State Law Enforcement
Officers Labor Alliance**
542 Ritchie Highway
Severna Park, Maryland 21146



Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

SB 351 – Department of State Police – Residency Requirements

Position: Support

January 29, 2025

The State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance (SLEOLA) is the exclusive representative for 1,757 active state law enforcement officers. SLEOLA supports this legislation which will remove the requirement that Maryland State Troopers live in Maryland, and allows them to live within 25 miles of Maryland's borders.

In addition to Maryland State Troopers, SLEOLA represents many other State Law Enforcement Officers. No other SLEOLA-represented officer has a statutory requirement to live in Maryland. In fact, no other state law enforcement officer, including Maryland Transportation Authority Police officers, are required to live in-state.

We believe that it is no longer appropriate to continue the current residency requirement.

We are not asking, and this legislation will not require, troopers to take their vehicles or firearms out of state. We are only requesting to be allowed to live out of state. Patrol vehicles could be parked at the state police barrack that is closest to the trooper's residence and agency firearms could be secured in the barracks.

Allowing troopers to live out of state will not impair the Department's ability to rapidly mobilize a large number of troopers in case of a large-scale emergency. Troopers are regularly assigned hours away from their residence. It is not uncommon for the Department to assign a trooper from the Eastern Shore to Prince George's County – hardly a convenient arrangement in an emergency. In addition, emergency mobilizations are quite rare. Since this bill requires that troopers live within 25 miles of the state line, response times would not be significantly impacted should a recall occur.

This legislation will enhance our recruiting efforts in our bordering states. As an example, a prospective qualified applicant who lives in Littlestown, Pennsylvania may hesitate to apply with the Maryland State Police because he does not want to move. However, given the opportunity to remain in Littlestown, he may apply. It is reasonable to believe that our applicant pool will expand.

Senate Bill 351 will not result in a mass exodus of troopers to other states. It will simply bring us in line with the other Maryland state and county police departments. This legislation was requested by several of our members and it would positively affect them if passed.

We request one amendment to Senate Bill 351. On page 1 in line 20 the word "Civilian" is added to current law. Civilians are currently not required to live in Maryland, and this would have the unintended consequence of requiring them to live in the State. We would ask that the reference to Civilians be deleted.

We respectfully request your favorable support, as amended, of this important piece of legislation. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.