

# **SB 351 - SLEOLA - FAV - 01-29-2025 JPR.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brian Gill

Position: FAV



**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.

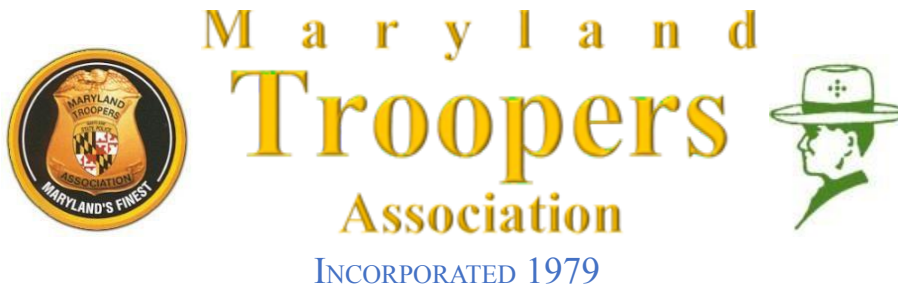
We request one amendment to Senate Bill 351. On page 1 in line 20 the word "Civilian" is added to current law. Civilians are currently not required to live in Maryland, and this would have the unintended consequence of requiring them to live in the State. We would ask that the reference to Civilians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

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

# **SB0351\_FAV\_MDTroopersAssociation.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christopher Dews

Position: FAV



**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  
President  
Maryland Troopers Association

**Member of National Troopers Coalition**

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# **SB351JacksonTestimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Jackson

Position: FWA

**MICHAEL A. JACKSON**  
*Legislative District 27*  
Calvert, Charles and  
Prince George's Counties

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Pensions

Public Safety, Transportation, and  
Environment



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***TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 351***  
***DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE –***  
***RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS***  
***JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE***  
***JANUARY 29, 2025***

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 351 simply alters the mandate that State Troopers live within the State, and it changes that to mandate that they live either within the State or within 25 miles of the State border.

Making this simple change would provide existing officers with the benefit of flexibility to best meet their personal needs and the needs of their families while at the same time providing the Department with clear recruitment and retention benefits.

As someone who both spent the majority of his professional career in the public safety field, and as someone who personally directed an agency, I know firsthand the challenges of recruiting and retaining officers as well as the necessity of finding ways to increase the appeal of service within our region. I believe this legislation a clear means to that end.

**For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 351.**

# **Maryland State Police Position Paper SB0351.pdf**

Uploaded by: Owen Traynor

Position: UNF



**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.