



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

HB 3 – Higher Education - Nonresident Tuition - Exemption for Dependents of State or Local Public Safety Employees (Maryland Fallen Heroes Tuition Benefits Act)

DATE: February 3, 2026
COMMITTEE: House Appropriations Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

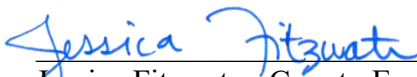
As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **HB 3 – Higher Education - Nonresident Tuition - Exemption for Dependents of State or Local Public Safety Employees (Maryland Fallen Heroes Tuition Benefits Act)** a favorable report. This bill grants in-state or in-county tuition at public institutions to children of State and local public safety employees who die in the line of duty, regardless of current residency.

Our public safety employees risk their lives daily to keep Maryland residents safe and protect others. When a first responder dies in the line of duty, we must ensure that their family has access to as many resources as possible to honor their sacrifice. This is not just our duty as elected officials, but as good neighbors, community members, and humans.

Currently, if the child of a first responder who has died in the line of duty lives outside Maryland, they are not eligible for in-state tuition at Maryland institutions of higher education. This creates hardship for families who have already endured the devastating loss of a loved one serving Maryland and its communities. Because of Frederick County's location near the borders of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, it is not unusual for our first responders to live in neighboring states. HB 3 ensures that children of first responders who die in the line of duty while serving communities in Maryland are eligible for in-state tuition, regardless of residency.

We must do all we can to support our first responders and their families, especially in the heartbreaking and life altering experience of a line of duty death – HB 3 is one small step that will make a significant impact for families whose loved ones gave their lives to protect and serve others.

I respectfully request that the State join us in our gratitude and advance HB 3 with a favorable report.



Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD