

MDSP_Support_HB1152 .pdf

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

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: March 25, 2026
BILL NUMBER: House Bill 1152 **POSITION:** Support
BILL TITLE: Department of State Police – Special Police Officers - Study

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation seeks to require the Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP) to conduct a comprehensive study and provide recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the employment and use of Special Police Officers. The MDSP is required to report their findings to the General Assembly and the Governor by December 1, 2026.

The statutory framework for appointing and approving Special Police Officers (SPOs) has been in place for many years. Recent statutory changes have modified certain SPO program parameters. With these changes being implemented, a comprehensive review is appropriate. This ensures the program operates as intended and serves public safety in the most defined and effective manner.

SPOs are uniquely authorized to serve designated properties, leveraging their in-depth, site-specific knowledge to deliver tailored security. Their consistent on-site presence enables rapid response and a visible public safety role that distinguishes them from other security options. By supporting property owners, institutions, and components of the judicial system, SPOs not only deter criminal activity but also directly enhance the sense of safety and well-being for many property stakeholders.

Members of law enforcement, State's Attorneys, and other stakeholders have raised questions and concerns about the scope and extent of SPOs' authority. House Bill 1152 provides a thoughtful, measured approach to examining these concerns while also evaluating the positive role SPOs play within their assigned jurisdictions.

Under House Bill 1152, the Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP) will consult with SPOs, their employers, police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and other impacted officials. This collaboration aims to identify challenges, highlight best practices, and develop balanced recommendations that enhance impact in the jurisdiction.

The MDSP looks forward to working with all stakeholders to produce a thorough report for the General Assembly.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of State Police urges the Committee to give House Bill 1152 a favorable report.

HB1152

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NICOLE A. WILLIAMS, ESQ.
Legislative District 22
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Judiciary Committee

Chair, Public Safety Subcommittee

Chair, Prince George's
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 25, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

House Bill 1152

Good afternoon Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. I am Delegate Nicole Williams, and I will be testifying in favor of House Bill 1152, also known as **Department of State Police - Special Police Officers - Study**. This legislation would require the Department of State Police to conduct a study regarding the employment and use of special police officers (SPOs). The findings and recommendations of this report would be due to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2026.

SPOs serve a variety of roles throughout the State of Maryland, with their authority and responsibility dependent on their jurisdiction or employer. This legislation seeks to provide a data-driven and evidence-based approach to identifying challenges, highlighting best practices, and developing balanced recommendations towards enhancing the role of SPOs. In doing so, this legislation will seek input from a variety of stakeholders, including SPOs, their employers, police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and other impacted officials. Such a collaboration offers an excellent opportunity to provide a thorough and detailed report on SPOs to the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly. For these reasons, I urge this committee to give a favorable report on House Bill 1152.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nicole Williams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Delegate Nicole A. Williams, Esq.