



## **Written Testimony in Support of SB520**

### **Property Tax – Charter Counties**

#### **Application of County Tax Limitation on Public Safety Budget**

##### **Position: Favorable**

I write to express strong support for Senate Bill 520, legislation that represents a critical investment in Maryland’s public safety workforce and the communities they serve. The men and women who carry out public safety responsibilities across our State—whether in emergency response, law enforcement, or community-based violence prevention—depend on consistent and adequate funding to perform their duties effectively and safely. Senate Bill 520 acknowledges this reality and takes an important step toward ensuring that these essential public servants are properly supported.

For too long, many public safety agencies have operated under resource constraints that strain personnel, limit training opportunities, and delay necessary equipment upgrades. These conditions not only impact service delivery but also place undue burdens on the workforce, contributing to burnout, retention challenges, and safety risks on the job. By establishing more stable and targeted funding, this legislation helps address these longstanding concerns and affirms the State’s commitment to those who serve on the front lines every day.

From a labor perspective, investments in public safety are investments in workers. Senate Bill 520 supports adequate staffing levels, enhances access to training and professional development, and helps ensure that employees have the tools and resources necessary to perform their duties safely and effectively. These are not abstract benefits—they directly impact workplace conditions, job performance, and the ability of agencies to recruit and retain qualified personnel in a competitive labor market.

At the same time, this legislation recognizes that effective public safety requires a comprehensive approach. By supporting both response capabilities and evidence-based prevention strategies, Senate Bill 520 promotes safer working environments for public safety personnel while also contributing to better outcomes for the communities they protect. Stronger coordination between state and local entities further ensures that resources are deployed efficiently and that workers are not left to compensate for systemic gaps.

Equally important is the bill's emphasis on accountability and responsible use of public funds. Our members understand the importance of transparency and measurable outcomes, and they take seriously their role as stewards of public trust. This legislation provides a framework for ensuring that investments translate into tangible improvements in both workplace conditions and public safety outcomes.

Inadequate funding of public safety systems has real and immediate consequences—not only for communities, but for the workers who are asked to do more with less. Senate Bill 520 represents a proactive and responsible effort to address these challenges by strengthening the workforce, improving working conditions, and ensuring that public safety agencies are equipped to meet current and future demands.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to give Senate Bill 520 a favorable report.

Submitted respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey Buddle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffrey Buddle, President  
Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland  
International Association of Fire Fighters, Local A-19, AFL-CIO

*The membership of the Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland includes 23 IAFF local affiliates from the following jurisdictions:*

*Federal: National Capital Federal Fire Fighters*

*State: Baltimore / Washington International Airport*

*Local: Annapolis City, Allegany County, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City (2 affiliates), Baltimore County, Carroll County, Cecil County, Charles County, Cumberland City, Frederick County, Garrett County, Hagerstown, Howard County, Montgomery County, Ocean City, Prince Georges County, Queen Annes County, Salisbury, Talbot County, Worcester County*