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Environment and Transportation
Committee

Subcommittees

Agriculture and Aquaculture

Energy

Environment

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 19, 2026

Testimony in Favor of HB0653
Income Tax – Subtraction Modification for Public Safety Retirement Income – Amount

Dear Chair Wilkins, Vice-Chair Feldmark, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

I respectfully request a favorable report of House Bill 653 to increase the subtraction modification for Public Safety retirement from \$15,000 to \$20,000 – it is also important to note that the approach in the legislation as introduced provides an incremental phase in of this increase, with a \$1,000 increase in the subtraction modification per year until we reach the \$20,000 amount.

Our first responders serve our communities with grace and courage, often placing themselves in harm's way to protect Marylanders. Whether they are firefighters, law enforcement officers, emergency medical professionals, or correctional officers – they dedicate their careers to public service, frequently at great personal sacrifice. House Bill 653 would provide a meaningful increased benefit and recognition to those that have served our communities and helped keep each and every Marylander safe.

While this legislation is not new to the Committee, I do believe that there are new considerations under the proposed legislation and based on previous legislation that should be considered with House Bill 563:

1. As mentioned previously, this legislation does provide a phased-in approach to the increase – with a \$1,000 a year increase in the income subtraction modification over the next five years.
2. The General Assembly passed the Keep Our Heroes Home Act in 2023 which increased the subtraction modification for military retirees from \$15,000 to \$20,000, and prior to the passage of that legislation there was parity amongst the income subtraction modification for both military retirees and our public safety retirees. That Act was incredibly important to those who served our nation, and this legislation would reinstitute parity for those that serve our communities here at home.

Once again, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 653 to help support our retired public safety personnel across the State.