

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 Enrolled - Revised

Senate Bill 996

(Senator Peters, *et al.*)

Budget and Taxation

Ways and Means

**Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Retirement Income (Hometown Heroes and Veterans Act of 2018)**

This bill expands the existing military retirement income tax subtraction modification by increasing to \$15,000 the maximum amount of retirement income that can be excluded from Maryland adjusted gross income for purposes of calculating Maryland income tax liability. In order to qualify for the increased subtraction modification, the individual must be at least 55 years old. The bill also expands the existing State subtraction modification for retired law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency services personnel by extending eligibility to correctional officers. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018, and applies to tax year 2018 and beyond.**

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund revenues decrease by \$6.5 million in FY 2019 due to additional retirement income being exempted. Future year revenue decreases reflect projected growth in the number of eligible taxpayers and retirement income. Expenditures are not affected.

(\$ in millions)	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
GF Revenue	(\$6.5)	(\$6.7)	(\$6.8)	(\$7.0)	(\$7.1)
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$6.5)	(\$6.7)	(\$6.8)	(\$7.0)	(\$7.1)

*Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** Local revenues decrease by \$4.3 million in FY 2019 and by \$4.7 million in FY 2023. Local expenditures are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** Beginning in tax year 2018, retired federal, State, and local correctional officers are eligible to claim the existing State subtraction modification for retired law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency services personnel. An eligible retiree includes an individual who was employed in (1) a State correctional facility; (2) a local correctional facility; (3) a juvenile facility; and (4) a facility of the United States that is equivalent to a State or local correctional facility or juvenile facility in the State.

### Current Law:

#### *Military Retirement Income*

Chapter 226 of 2006 expanded a \$2,500 military retirement income subtraction that was previously limited to enlisted military members with federal adjusted gross income of \$22,500 or less. Chapter 226 allows an individual to exempt the first \$5,000 of military retirement income from State and local taxation if the retirement income resulted from service in an active or reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces or in the Maryland National Guard. Retirees from active duty with the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), or the Coast and Geodetic Survey also qualify for the subtraction modification. Chapter 125 of 2015 expanded to \$10,000 the maximum value of the subtraction modification for individuals who are at least age 65.

#### *State Pension Exclusion – All Eligible Individuals*

Maryland law also provides a pension exclusion subtraction modification for individuals who are at least age 65 or who are totally disabled. Up to a specified maximum amount of taxable pension income (\$29,900 for 2017) may be exempt from tax. The maximum exclusion allowed is indexed to the maximum annual benefit payable under the Social Security Act and is reduced by the amount of any Social Security payments received. Military retirement income exempted under the subtraction modification cannot be counted toward the State pension exclusion.

Social Security benefits and benefits received under the federal Railroad Retirement Act are totally exempt from the Maryland income tax, even though they may be partly taxable for federal income tax purposes. In addition to the special treatment of Social Security and other retirement income, other income tax relief is provided to senior citizens regardless of the source of their income. In addition to the regular personal exemption available to all taxpayers, an additional exemption amount of \$1,000 may be claimed by an elderly or blind individual.

*Law Enforcement Officer and Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Personnel*

Retired law enforcement officers and fire, rescue, or emergency services personnel who are age 65 or older or are totally disabled qualify and claim the State pension exclusion in the same manner as other eligible retirees as described above.

Chapters 153 and 154 of 2017 established a pension exclusion for retired law enforcement officers or fire, rescue, or emergency services personnel. Retirement income qualifies for the State pension exclusion if the individual is between the ages of 55 and 64 and the retirement income is attributable to employment as a law enforcement officer or as a fire, rescue, or emergency services personnel of the United States, the State, or a local jurisdiction. Emergency services personnel includes emergency medical technicians and paramedics. The maximum exclusion in the tax year is limited to \$15,000.

**Background:** According to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), 51,502 Maryland military retirees received a total of \$128.1 million in retirement income from the U.S. Department of Defense in September 2016. This includes individuals who served in the Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force. On an annualized basis, this retirement income totaled \$1.54 billion. A small portion of this amount includes retirees who receive disability payments. Disability payments resulting from active service in the U.S. Armed Forces, NOAA, Public Health Service, or Foreign Service are generally not taxable for State income tax purposes because those payments may be exempt from federal taxation under specified circumstances. In addition, DMDC reports that 1,363 Maryland National Guard retirees and 6,887 military and Coast Guard survivors also received retirement income in September 2016. **Exhibit 1** lists the total retirement pay (including disability pay) received by Maryland military retirees by branch of service.

---

**Exhibit 1**  
**Retirement Payments by Branch of Service**  
**September 2016**

<b><u>Branch</u></b>	<b><u>Retirees</u></b>	<b><u>Received Pension</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Pension Income (\$ in Millions)</u></b>	<b><u>Average</u></b>
Army	20,827	19,147	\$554.2	\$28,942
Navy	15,794	15,037	483.3	32,143
Marines	2,875	2,506	76.2	30,417
Air Force	15,677	14,812	423.0	28,555
<b>Total</b>	<b>55,173</b>	<b>51,502</b>	<b>\$1,536.7</b>	<b>\$29,837</b>

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center

---

According to the Office of Commissioned Corps Force Management Information System, 762 Maryland residents who retired from the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service received a total of \$52.1 million, or an average of \$68,300, in retirement income during 2005.

**State Revenues:** Additional retirement income can be exempted beginning in tax year 2018. It is assumed that individuals do not adjust withholdings and estimated payments. As a result, State revenues will decrease by \$6.5 million in fiscal 2019. **Exhibit 2** shows the projected State and local revenue loss from exempting specified military and correctional officer retirement income. The estimated impact of exempting additional military retirement income is based on the number of retirees who are at least 55 years of age and the amount of retirement income received by State residents as reported by DMDC and the Office of Commissioned Corps Force Management Information System, the estimated cost of the current military retirement income subtraction modification, the interaction with the State pension exclusion, and U.S. Congressional Budget Office projections on future military retiree payments. Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, it is estimated that about 20% of military retirees are not taxable.

---

**Exhibit 2**  
**Projected State and Local Revenue Loss**  
**(\$ in Millions)**

	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>	<u>FY 2023</u>
<b><u>Correctional Officers</u></b>					
State	(\$1.7)	(\$1.7)	(\$1.8)	(\$1.8)	(\$1.9)
Local	(1.2)	(1.2)	(1.2)	(1.3)	(1.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(\$2.9)</b>	<b>(\$3.0)</b>	<b>(\$3.0)</b>	<b>(\$3.1)</b>	<b>(\$3.2)</b>
<b><u>Military Retirement</u></b>					
State	(\$4.8)	(\$4.9)	(\$5.0)	(\$5.1)	(\$5.2)
Local	(3.1)	(3.2)	(3.3)	(3.3)	(3.4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(\$7.9)</b>	<b>(\$8.1)</b>	<b>(\$8.3)</b>	<b>(\$8.5)</b>	<b>(\$8.6)</b>
<b><u>Total</u></b>					
State	(\$6.5)	(\$6.7)	(\$6.8)	(\$7.0)	(\$7.1)
Local	(4.3)	(4.4)	(4.5)	(4.6)	(4.7)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(\$10.8)</b>	<b>(\$11.1)</b>	<b>(\$11.3)</b>	<b>(\$11.6)</b>	<b>(\$11.8)</b>

---

According to the State Retirement Agency, approximately 5,700 State correctional officer retirees and survivors currently receive benefits. Based on the requirements of the bill, it is estimated that approximately 25% of these individuals reside in Maryland and qualify for the pension exclusion proposed by the bill. This estimate is increased to account for federal and local correctional officers and those employed in a correctional facility or juvenile facility.

**Local Revenues:** Local income tax revenues decrease by about 3% of the total net State subtraction modifications claimed. Local revenues will decrease by \$4.3 million in fiscal 2019 and by \$4.7 million in fiscal 2023 as shown in Exhibit 2.

---

### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Congressional Budget Office; Defense Manpower Data Center; Department of Defense (Office of Actuary); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Office of Commissioned Corps Force Management Information System; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 9, 2018  
md/hlb Third Reader - March 27, 2018  
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 27, 2018  
Enrolled - April 24, 2018  
Revised - Amendment(s) - April 24, 2018

---

Analysis by: Robert J. Rehrmann

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510