

SB983- Property Tax Credit (1).pdf

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Position: FAV



FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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March 11, 2022

The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA), the nation's largest non-partisan professional association representing federal law enforcement officers from 65 federal law enforcement agency, applauds the introduction of the SB983: Property Tax Credit - Disabled Law Enforcement Officers and Rescue Workers - Federal Police and Criminal Investigators.

Disabled Federal Agents are not able to work in order to supplement their income like retirees so any financial relief they can receive is beneficial. We are aware of this same benefit being extended to all local law enforcement, i.e county police, community college police, fire marshals, private university police and we ask the same courtesy be extended to those that sacrifice so much for our country. Unfortunately, inflation is climbing faster than the federal government can initiate cost of living expenses increases.

The inflation increase is based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which tracks both the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). Accordingly, BLS reported that the CPI-W rose 5.8 percent over the 12 months ending in August. COLAs for the past 10 years have averaged 1.7 percent, with increases ranging from zero in 2015 to 3.6 percent in 2011. The most recent year beneficiaries received a COLA of more than 5 percent was in 2008, when there was 5.8 percent increase.

Those federal law enforcement officers, who are often one-income households and live in MD tend to live in high priced areas of our state, are also feeling the sting of inflation that is stretching and stressing their resources.

With the historic increases in housing prices in many areas, placing home ownership out of reach for those that serve their community, SB983: Property Tax Credit - Disabled Law Enforcement Officers and Rescue Workers - Federal Police and Criminal Investigators would establish an exemption on county property taxes for federal agents and capitol police. This program would be fiscally neutral as it would be required to pass each individual county council before being administered under the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and allow first responders and educators to be able to afford the purchase of a home.

This bill, modeled after the MD Code, Tax - Property, § 9-210, would correct the wrong of not initially including federal agents and capitol police while removing some of the residency requirements in order to be eligible for this tax credit. This bill would waive the property tax for disabled federal agents and capitol police who have been hurt in the line of duty.

FLEOA looks forward to working with you to ensure disabled federal agents and capitol police that worked to support and protect our communities are able to achieve the American dream of home ownership while being exempt in property taxes when at a time when that dream seems far out or reach for far too many. If we can be of any additional assistance, feel free to contact us at fleoa@fleoa.org.

Sincerely,

Mathew N. Silverman

President Chapter 45, Maryland
Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association

Representing Members From:

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OIG
Forest Service
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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Export Enforcement
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Personal SB983 Written Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Mark Cicero

Position: FAV

SB983

Property Tax Credit - Disabled Law Enforcement Officers and Rescue Workers - Federal Police and Criminal Investigators

Testimony of Mark Cicero - In Support

February 1, 2022

Chair Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Washington, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

For the record, my name is Mark Cicero and I am a disabled Federal Agent living in Maryland. I grew up in Cape St Claire and attended St. Mary's for 12 years. Upon graduation from college and graduate school, I started working for the US Government in various positions, moving my way up the ladder from Quality Assurance Specialist, Contract Specialist, and finally Federal Agent. I was injured on 02/02/2010 and required 3 back surgeries over a period of 2 years to try and eliminate the pain from my injury. While these surgeries were mildly successful I still had pain and was labeled "disabled" and unable to work. I eventually made my way back home to get the support of family after getting divorced and gaining primary custody of my son. Since my return to Maryland I have been active in many volunteer activities to include but not limited to Friends of the Lighthouse Board, Wellness House, Cub Scouts etc....

While hearing of other states having laws on the books that allow disabled law enforcement to be exempt from county property tax I was surprised that while MD does allow local/county law enforcement to be exempt from county property taxes it does not allow this for Federal Agents. While military retirees with disability (even 100%) are able to start a new career and their new salary just supplements their retirement/disability retirement, Federal Agents are the complete opposite.

Once a Federal Agent is labeled as disabled, we are given a portion of our salary when we were working. If an agent was making \$50,000 while working, we now make \$37,500. If we are able to get clearance from a doctor to start working (in any field) we would then get that amount deducted from our salary for the rest of our lives regardless if we continued working or not. For example, if I wanted to work as a substitute teacher and say I make \$7,500 a year doing this then I would make \$30,000 a year for the rest of my life even if I decided not to work as a substitute teacher ever again for whatever the reason as the government's position is that I have proven I can make \$7,500 a year.

Due to our geographic location, Maryland is home to many federal agents who have been injured in the line of duty, like myself. This tax benefit would provide financial relief for those that have been injured while serving our country.

For these reasons and the fact that these men and women have put their lives at risk just like local law enforcement, I believe we should receive the same benefits/tax breaks they are entitled to in MD.

SB0983-BT_MACo_SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Kevin Kinnally

Position: FWA



Senate Bill 983

*Property Tax Credit - Disabled Law Enforcement Officers and Rescue Workers -
Federal Police and Criminal Investigators*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: March 16, 2022

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 983 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill would expand eligibility for a local option property tax credit for a disabled law enforcement officer or rescue worker. **MACo requests amendments to clarify that any expansion of an existing credit is subject to the discretion of the local governing body.**

MACo generally supports legislation that provides broad authority to enact tax incentives for revitalization and tax relief purposes, and welcomes the opportunity to work with state policymakers to develop flexible and optional tools to implement comprehensive or targeted tax incentives.

Current law enables local governments to grant a property tax credit for an eligible disabled law enforcement officer or rescue worker, surviving spouse, or a cohabitant. Additionally, local governments may provide, by law, for the amount and duration of the credit and, if necessary, additional eligibility criteria.

SB 983 would expand eligibility for the credit by including specified federal police officers, detectives, and criminal investigators and alter the timeframe for which an eligible individual must be domiciled in the state to qualify for the credit.

Several counties currently grant a property tax credit for disabled law enforcement officers or rescue workers. Expanding the credit may affect local programs, resulting in a more considerable fiscal loss than counties anticipated when originally enacting the credits. An amendment would alleviate this concern by clarifying that any expansion of an existing credit is subject to the discretion of the local governing body.

Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 983.