



BYRON E. MACFARLANE
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February 1, 2023

The Honorable Guy J. Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 204 – State Retirement and Pension System – Vesting and Retirement Allowance – Clerk of Court and Register of Wills – FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

My name is Byron Macfarlane, I am the Register of Wills for Howard County, and on behalf of the Maryland Registers of Wills Association, I write to respectfully request a favorable report for Senate Bill 204.

This measure will put the Clerks of Court and Registers of Wills in line with every other constitutional elected official in Maryland in having a carve-out from the standard 10-year requirement for vesting in the State Retirement and Pension System. As you know, these roles are highly skilled, complex administrative positions in which a Clerk or Register oversees everything from hiring and internal personnel management, to fiscal operations and following all state audit requirements, to the day-to-day functioning of critical judicial agencies the public relies on for prompt, efficient, and customer-friendly service. For these vital roles, this bill would simply change the period of service for vesting from 10 years to 8 years, or two full four-year terms in office. It would also eliminate the odd requirement that we serve *portions* of terms – two and one half to be precise - in order to vest.

As the Fiscal Note indicates, there is only one current Register this legislation would impact so the fiscal impact of this legislation is minimal. The other 23 Registers are already vested or will vest before their current term expires. So, this measure is more prospective for future Registers than is it curative for any current officeholders.

I respectfully recommend a favorable report to Senate Bill 204 and appreciate the Committee's thoughtful attention to this bill.

Sincerely,

Byron E. Macfarlane
Register of Wills