

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORT

2023 Legislative Session

Reference No.: CB-087-2023

Draft No.: 2

Committee: Government Operations and Fiscal Policy

Date: 10/12/2023

Action: (FAV) (A)

REPORT: Committee Vote: Favorable as amended 4-0-1 (In favor: Council Members Burroughs, Oriadha, Fisher, and Ivey)

Abstain: Council Member Harrison

The Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee convened on October 12, 2023, to consider CB-87-2023. The bill amends Subtitle 10: Finance and Taxation of the County Code. It seeks to incentivize public safety officers to work and live in the county by offering them a yearly tax credit of \$2500.00. The Director of Finance provides the application for this credit before October 1st of each fiscal year. Additionally, the Director of Finance must submit an annual report to the County Council by December 31st of each year regarding the property tax credit for the impacted dwellings.

The bill sponsor indicated that if we continue with the increase in crime and shortage of staff, we will only lose residents to other jurisdictions where they feel safer. This is a worthy investment, and if we have to spend our money, this is where we should spend it to ensure we protect our community.

Written comments were provided by the Prince George's County Association of Realtors in support of CB-87-2023.

Public testimony was heard. Sweatism Consulting LLC, on behalf of the Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Associations, provided comments supporting CB-87-2023 with a proposed amendment. All the public safety officers who spoke favored this bill.

The Voluntary Fire Chief had concerns regarding the Length of Service Award (LOSAP) stipend, but an agreement was made on page 2, line 5, to remove "for an annual stipend" to the Length of Service.

Page 2, line 12 to insert “continually lives in dwelling” in the County.

A Council Member questioned the homestead tax credit having a 20% threshold and how this would impact the proposed legislation. The bill sponsor explained that this was initiated from state-enabling legislation, which the previous Council had considered.

A Council Member expressed concern regarding the funding for the tax credit, given the expected state budget cuts in the upcoming budget cycle.

A Council Member asked if there are a number of calls you have to be on to qualify for LOSAP. The Voluntary Fire Chief explained that you can only get credit for 40 calls per month, and unfortunately, most of their people run more than 40 calls.

The Office of Law finds CB-87-2023 to be in proper legislative form with no legal impediments to enactment.

The Administration representative indicated they were taking no position on CB-87-2023 and the amendments that were just moved. The Administration representative explained that the administration had made much investment in providing incentives for public safety officers and is curious as to any data that would show that if this bill were enacted, it would be a real effective incentive and incentivize the public safety officers to not only come into the county to work but to stay here.

The Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement indicates that modest additional expenditures may be required for administrative costs. There may be a significant reduction in revenue. The indirect impact is favorable.

The Legislative Officer explained the amendments, and a motion passed 4-0-1 to accept the amendments.

1. On Page 2, Line 2, After “police officer,” insert “public safety dispatcher”.
2. On Page 2, Line 5, remove “for an annual stipend”.

3. On Page 2, Line 12, After “public safety officer,” insert “and that public safety officer currently and continually lives in said dwelling.”
4. On Page 2, Line 22, After “Prince George’s County, Maryland,” insert “and that public safety officer currently and continually lives in said dwelling.”

The Government Operation and Fiscal Policy Committee voted 4-0-1 favorably as amended on CB-87-2023.