



OUR MISSION:

Working to enhance the economic prosperity of greater Silver Spring through robust promotion of our member businesses and unrelenting advocacy on their behalf.

**Bill 39-21, Taxation – Public Safety Officers – Public Safety Emergency
Communications Specialists – Property Tax Credit
Testimony in Support
Tuesday, November 9, 2021**

The Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce supports Bill 39-21, that would establish a County property tax credit for certain public safety officers employed by the County.

Montgomery County is known as one of the best places to live in Maryland, no doubt in the entire country. We boast a diverse and highly-educated population. We have unique and interesting neighborhoods. Our schools are excellent. We offer endless art and entertainment attractions, amazing restaurants, and a growing brewery/winery scene. There are plenty of options to enjoy the great outdoors. And there is so much more. . .

But, while our first responders have done an excellent job of keeping our County among the country's safest places, many cannot afford the high cost of living here. This, we believe, has contributed, in part, to the County's difficulty in recruiting and retaining first responders, especially police officers.

The General Assembly authorized the County to enact a property tax credit for certain public safety officers and emergency communications specialists. Bill 39-21 would establish a that credit, up to \$2,500 per eligible employee, for full-time sworn police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and public safety emergency communications specialists employed by the County. Now is the time to move forward to provide an incentive for these critical first responders who are some of our County's most important assets.

The Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce is thankful for the great work and commitment of our sworn police officers and other first responders. We have come to personally know so many of these dedicated men and women through their efforts here in Silver Spring. We would like to see many more of them find a way to call home the community they serve so well. We welcome them be not only our protectors, but also our neighbors. Bill 39-21 can help to make that happen.

For these reasons, the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce urges your support for Bill 39-21 to create County property tax credit for all full-time first responders living in the County.