

SENATE BILL 191

Q2

(4lr1100)

ENROLLED BILL

— Budget and Taxation / Ways and Means —

Introduced by **Senator A. Washington**

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

Proofreader.

Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this

_____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock, _____ M.

President.

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Prince George's County — ~~Property Tax Credit~~ — Public School Employees**
3 **Property Tax Credit and Office of Integrity and Compliance**

4 **PG 503-24**

5 FOR the purpose of authorizing the governing body of Prince George's County to grant, by
6 law, a property tax credit against the county property tax imposed on dwellings that
7 are owned by certain eligible employees of the Prince George's County Public School
8 System; providing for the maximum amount of the credit; authorizing the governing
9 body of Prince George's County to provide, by law, for certain matters relating to the
10 credit; requiring the Prince George's County government to submit a certain report
11 concerning the credit to certain persons on or before a certain date; providing that
12 the Office of Integrity and Compliance is an independent unit within the school
13 system; specifying the independent nature and contractual relationship of the
14 Integrity and Compliance Officer and other employees within the Office; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

Italics indicate opposite chamber/conference committee amendments.



generally relating to ~~a property tax credit in Prince George's County for certain eligible employees~~ Prince George's County Public School System employees and the Office of Integrity and Compliance.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Education

Section 4-404(b)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Education

Section 4-404(c), (d), and (e)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – Tax – Property

Section 9-318(j)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2019 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

4-404.

(b) This section applies only in Prince George's County.

(c) (1) There is an Office of Integrity and Compliance in the local school system.

(2) **THE OFFICE IS AN INDEPENDENT UNIT WITHIN THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM.**

(3) (i) The County Council of Prince George's County shall select [and], appoint, AND CONTRACT WITH an Integrity and Compliance Officer.

(ii) The County Council shall select the Integrity and Compliance Officer solely on the basis of professional ability and personal integrity, without regard to political affiliation.

(iii) The Integrity and Compliance Officer must be qualified professionally by experience or education in auditing, government operations, or financial management.

1 (d) (1) The term of the Integrity and Compliance Officer is 4 years beginning on
2 the date of appointment.

3 (2) An individual may not serve as Integrity and Compliance Officer for
4 more than three terms.

5 (3) The Integrity and Compliance Officer continues to serve until a successor
6 is appointed.

7 (4) If a vacancy occurs for the Integrity and Compliance Officer, the County
8 Council shall appoint an Interim Integrity and Compliance Officer to serve for the remainder
9 of the unexpired term.

10 (5) The County Council may remove the Integrity and Compliance Officer
11 only through a majority vote of the County Council for neglect of duty, malfeasance,
12 conviction of a felony, or other good cause.

13 (6) **THE INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE OFFICER SHALL SERVE AS AN**
14 **INDEPENDENT EMPLOYEE WITHIN THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM.**

15 (7) The Integrity and Compliance Officer shall discharge the duties of office
16 on a full-time basis and with no secondary employment of any nature during the Integrity
17 and Compliance Officer's term.

18 (e) (1) The Office shall:

19 (i) Assist the County Council and the local school system by
20 providing independent evaluation and recommendations regarding opportunities to:

21 1. Preserve the local school system's reputation; and

22 2. Improve the effectiveness, productivity, or efficiency of local
23 school system programs, policies, practices, and operations;

24 (ii) Ensure public accountability by preventing, investigating, and
25 reporting instances of fraud, waste, and abuse of property or funds of the local school system;

26 (iii) Examine, evaluate, and report on the adequacy and effectiveness
27 of the systems of internal controls and their related accounting, financial, technology, and
28 operational policies; and

29 (iv) Report noncompliance with and propose ways to improve
30 employee compliance with applicable law, policy, and ethical standards of conduct.

1 (2) (1) THE OFFICE MAY EMPLOY STAFF IN ORDER TO EXECUTE THE
2 DUTIES OF THE OFFICE.

3 (II) STAFF EMPLOYED BY THE OFFICE SHALL SERVE UNDER THE
4 SUPERVISION AND DIRECTION OF THE INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE OFFICER.

5 (3) In developing recommendations, the Office may:

6 (i) Conduct administrative investigations, budgetary analyses, and
7 financial, management, or performance audits and similar reviews;

8 (ii) Provide management advisories; and

9 (iii) Utilize the assistance from any other government agency or
10 private party to complete a project initiated by the Office.

11 ~~[(3)]~~ (4) When applicable, the Integrity and Compliance Officer shall
12 comply with generally accepted government auditing standards.

13 ~~[(4)]~~ (5) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,
14 the Integrity and Compliance Officer shall publish on the Office's website, in a readily
15 available location:

16 1. [Periodic reports] A REPORT AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 2
17 YEARS, BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2025, that [summarize] SUMMARIZES the activities,
18 findings, recommendations, and accomplishments of the Office; and

19 2. Any official written comments or responses offered by the
20 local school system administration with any report published by the Office.

21 (ii) The Integrity and Compliance Officer:

22 1. May not disclose any record, report, or related information
23 that is protected from disclosure under the Public Information Act;

24 2. May provide an oral report if appropriate under generally
25 accepted government auditing standards; and

26 3. Shall establish and follow procedures for safeguarding the
27 identity of confidential sources and protecting privileged and confidential information.

28 ~~[(5)]~~ (6) If reasonable grounds exist to believe that a serious violation of
29 federal, State, or local law has occurred, the Integrity and Compliance Officer shall report
30 the allegation to:

31 (i) An appropriate law enforcement agency;

(ii) The State Ethics Commission; or

(iii) Any other agency with jurisdiction to enforce the law.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Tax – Property

9–318.

(J) (1) (I) IN THIS SUBSECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(II) “DWELLING” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 9–105 OF THIS TITLE.

(III) 1. “ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE” MEANS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM WHO HAS BEEN A FULL–TIME EMPLOYEE FOR AT LEAST 2 YEARS AND OWNS A DWELLING IN PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY.

2. “ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE” DOES NOT INCLUDE INDIVIDUALS WHO SUPPLY GOODS OR SERVICES TO THE PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ON A CONTRACTUAL BASIS.

(2) THE GOVERNING BODY OF PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY MAY GRANT, BY LAW, A PROPERTY TAX CREDIT UNDER THIS SUBSECTION AGAINST THE COUNTY PROPERTY TAX IMPOSED ON A DWELLING THAT IS OWNED BY AN ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE WHO:

(I) DID NOT RESIDE IN THE COUNTY BEFORE PURCHASING THE DWELLING FOR WHICH THE CREDIT IS CLAIMED; AND

(II) IS OTHERWISE ELIGIBLE FOR THE CREDIT AUTHORIZED UNDER § 9–105 OF THIS TITLE.

(3) FOR ANY TAXABLE YEAR, THE CREDIT UNDER THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT EXCEED THE LESSER OF:

(I) \$2,500; OR

(II) THE AMOUNT OF THE PROPERTY TAX IMPOSED ON THE DWELLING.

(4) THE GOVERNING BODY OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY MAY ESTABLISH, BY LAW:

(I) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE AMOUNT OF THE CREDIT UNDER THIS SUBSECTION;

(II) THE DURATION OF THE CREDIT;

(III) ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES TO QUALIFY FOR THE CREDIT;

(IV) PROCEDURES FOR THE APPLICATION AND UNIFORM PROCESSING OF REQUESTS FOR THE CREDIT; AND

(V) ANY OTHER PROVISION NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THIS SUBSECTION.

SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before the date that is 5 years after the effective date of a local law passed by the Prince George's County Council that establishes the tax credit authorized by Section 2 of this Act, the Prince George's County government shall submit a report, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, that states the number of Prince George's County Public School System employees who received the tax credit authorized by Section 2 of this Act in the preceding 5 years to the Prince George's County Delegation, the Prince George's County Senators, the Prince George's County Council, and the Prince George's County Executive.

SECTION ~~3~~ 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2024, ~~and~~ Section 2 of this Act shall be applicable to all taxable years beginning after June 30, 2024.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.