



International Brotherhood of Police Officers

A DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

H-5179

Written Testimony of:

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State Director

International Brotherhood of Police Officers (IBPO)

Good Afternoon, Madame Chairwoman and Honorable Members of the House Labor Committee. As State Director of the International Brotherhood of Police Officers (IBPO), I submit this testimony on behalf of the 28 municipal police departments for which the IBPO is the bargaining representative.

I have spoken to Representative Bennett about this bill, and there will be a Sub A because the language should read the same as H-5178, the firefighters bill.

Notwithstanding the language currently before you, I will explain to you why IBPO supports contract continuation of Police Officers.

In 1963 the General Assembly passed legislation known as the "Policeman's Arbitration Act." This act gave Police a mechanism for resolving contract disputes through binding arbitration, which was in lieu of the right to strike. This was done to ensure that police services were not interrupted. This made sense because you could not have your police department going on strike because this would cause havoc. Since the enactment of this legislation, some court rulings have been interpreted by some management attorneys to advise their clients that they are free to implement changes to the collective bargaining agreement at the time the contract expires. This could cause a major problems because many times negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement go beyond the expiration date, which is usually June 30. If the parties reach an impasse at any time either side could request the unresolved issues be referred to arbitration. This eliminates the possibility that either side can stall negotiations.

In light of this, it does not seem likely that in 1963 the General Assembly when passing this Act intended that on the expiration date of the contract your contract just ends, and 50+ years of negotiated contract language is just eliminated.

Therefore, I would ask you to support H-5179 and its Sub A. Remember, this bill only keeps the contract in force until such time as a successor agreement is reached or an interest arbitration award has been rendered.

Thank you for your time, and should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at my office 467-2830.