



STATE OF NEW YORK  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
ALBANY 12224

APPROVAL # 21  
CHAPTER # 561

December 18, 2015

MEMORANDUM filed with Senate Bill 3221, entitled:

“AN ACT to amend the retirement and social security law and the civil service law, in relation to university police officers appointed by the state university of New York

APPROVED

Unlike every other police officer in New York who are members of the New York State Police and Fire Retirement System (“PFRS”), SUNY police officers are currently members of the New York State and Local Employees’ Retirement System (“ERS”). As a result, they must work until the age of 63 in order to collect their pension without any reductions. In contrast, other police officers in the State can opt-in to a 20- or 25-year retirement plan offered by their employer through PFRS. This bill would provide parity to SUNY Police Officers to transfer from ERS to PFRS and elect to be covered by the provisions of a 25-year retirement plan.

Any bill that would propose a modification to pension benefits must be carefully evaluated to ensure that critical pension reforms remain intact and that any associated fiscal costs are carefully managed.

In this instance, SUNY police officers are treated differently with regard to the opt-in policy than every other police officer in the State. This is unfair. SUNY police officers complete the same training as other officers and engage in similar work involving dangerous situations to protect the public, but then often transfer to other state or municipal police departments solely because of the inequality in retirement benefits. This increases the attrition rate for SUNY and achieves nothing else.

This bill would allow for parity between SUNY Police Officers and other police officers in this State. This bill will also decrease attrition, ensuring a consistent and well-trained police force on SUNY campuses statewide. For those reasons, I am signing this bill.

This bill is approved.