

HB 1997 -- LEGISLATIVE SECURITY OFFICERS

SPONSOR: Irwin

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs by a vote of 7 to 5 with 1 member voting present. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 7 to 1 with 2 members voting present.

This bill allows the General Assembly, the House of Representatives, or the Senate to hire legislative security officers to ensure the security and the functioning of the General Assembly. The legislative security officers will be certified by the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) Commission and will have all the powers granted to law enforcement officers in this State.

This bill is similar to HB 1193 (2025).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this is a tool to ensure all who come and work at our Capitol are safe while they watch the legislative process unfold. The Constitution gives arrest authority to our security, but there's no statutory authority, which is necessary for Capitol Security to access important law enforcement information systems. This bill allows for coordination between Federal, State, and local law enforcement, and will allow Capitol Security to check license plates and investigate suspicious persons as necessary. This isn't about weaponizing government agencies or militarizing security forces; there are five members, and this bill doesn't change their uniform equipment. The bill mitigates risk and adds an additional layer of protection. It is important that Capitol Security doesn't become a political sword and that individuals aren't removed for political reasons or disagreement.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Irwin and Arnie Dienoff .

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that security presence on the Capitol grounds has increased rapidly.

Testifying in person on the bill was Laurel Youmans.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.