



**SPEAK YOUR MIND. GET REWARDED.**

Turn your shopping habits into coupons, samples & more.

**START SURVEY**

## Governor's proposed bonus falls flat with state employees, who want pay raise



Capitol Square in Richmond.

1

BY MICHAEL MARTZ Richmond Times-Dispatch | Posted 3 hours ago

A one-time bonus proposed by Gov. Terry McAuliffe has fallen flat with representatives of Virginia State Police and other state employees, who say they will look to the General Assembly instead to restore pay raises that were cut to address a revenue shortfall now estimated at \$1.26 billion.



McAuliffe included the 1.5 percent bonus in a proposed compensation package totaling \$130.6 million, but employee representatives say it doesn't address the serious pay inequities that the cancelled 3 percent raise was aimed at narrowing.

"State employee morale is in the toilet," said R. Ronald Jordan, executive director of the Virginia Governmental Employees Association. "A bonus sends a signal that we're not really committed to fixing salary disparities."

Jordan is a member of a commission led by House Speaker William J. Howell, R-Stafford, that this week

strongly endorsed restoration of the pay raise for state employees to begin restoring compensation that is lagging the private labor market by an average of 27 percent.

He said the governor's budget proposal, delivered today to a joint meeting of the General Assembly money committees, sets out spending priorities that fail to address the state work force's needs.

"It is clear that state pay raises are not a priority," he said.

Brian Coy, the governor's spokesman, said the bonus, which would be paid next December, is based on projected one-time savings from a proposed tax amnesty, expanding the number of businesses that would pay accelerated sales taxes and requiring online distribution centers to pay sales taxes.

"It would be fiscally irresponsible for us to include a pay raise and pay for it with one-time money," he said.

Coy said the governor would support pay raises if revenues continue to improve, but "at this point, we're debating between pay raises and education cuts."

If legislators want to restore the pay raise, as Howell's commission has proposed, he added, "The question for them is what will you cut or what will you tax?"

Col. M. Wayne Huggins, executive director of the Virginia State Police Association, said the governor's proposal will not stem the escalating departure of sworn troopers and other state police employees because of low entry-level pay.

"Unless this issue is addressed significantly and immediately, we can expect to see that exodus continue," said Huggins, a former superintendent of state police.

"People are disappointed," he said.

Huggins and Jordan said they are now counting on the General Assembly to do what the governor did not.

"Our people are hopeful the General Assembly is going to address these issues in a significant way," Huggins said.

McAuliffe's proposed bonus also was greeted coolly by Republican budget leaders.

"A bonus is not something I'm interested in at this point," House Appropriations Chairman S. Chris Jones, R-Suffolk, said after the governor's speech.

"We need to do a salary adjustment," Jones said, citing the potential new revenue proposed by McAuliffe.

[mmartz@timesdispatch.com](mailto:mmartz@timesdispatch.com)

(804) 649-6964



<a href="#">Home</a>	<a href="#">Comments</a>	<a href="#">More News</a>	<a href="#">Full Site</a>
----------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------