

THE CAPITAL
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ARUNDELDIGEST

Sheriff: Tax refund program a success

ANNAPOLIS — Anne Arundel County Sheriff Ron Bateman is again scheduled to testify before state lawmakers Tuesday on the success of an initiative to withhold tax refunds for those with open warrants.

Bateman is expected testify at a 1 p.m. meeting of the House of Delegates Ways and Means Committee in support of legislation that would allow Washington County and Baltimore to begin similar warrant programs.

The sheriff supported a similar measure in the Senate last week during testimony before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee.

Anne Arundel's initiative was launched as a one-year pilot program in October 2012. The program is a collaboration of the state Comptroller's Office, the Motor Vehicle Administration and the governor's office of Crime Control and Prevention.

The program targets Anne Arundel residents wanted on open warrants who are due a tax refund, but have not filed a joint return with a spouse.

Letters are sent to those residents, informing them that their tax refunds are being withheld until the warrants have been served.

During the program's inception, 446 notices were mailed, resulting in 258 arrests.

There is a backlog of 8,930 open warrants in Anne Arundel County.