



THE AMERICAN LEGION
Department of Maryland
Legislative Commission

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STATEMENT IN SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 1010
PUBLIC SAFETY – MARYLAND CODE of MILITARY JUSTICE

Chairman Smith and distinguished members of the Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee,

Senate Bill 1010 in the estimation of The American Legion if enacted would bring the Maryland National Guard and the Air National Guard into conformance with the fulltime branches of the U. S. Armed Forces in terms of jurisprudence.

The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) passed by the Congress on May 5, 1950 has been the legal standard for all branches and the word *uniform* in the Code's title refer to its consistent application to all services. Adapting the Code would bring the Maryland military in line with the Nation's military branches.

There are several features included in SB 1010 which appeals to The American Legion. The bill provides authority for Judge Advocates allowing these individuals more leeway in determining the seriousness of the violation along with creating a non-judicial punishments for less serious infractions.

Other features worth noting in our opinion include establishing a comprehensive program for victims' rights. This aspect appears to be modeled after our State regulations rather than the present language of the UCMJ and formalizes a pre-trial procedure.

Another area highlighted in SB 1010's *Fiscal and Policy Note* is communication to enlistees on the UCMJ's significance to their military life. This is accomplished twice: soon after the swearing in procedure and later in the training program.

The American Legion Department of Maryland representing over 48,000 active duty personnel including our State's National Guard and Air Guard, veterans serving in all wars since 1917 along with their families believe Senate Bill 1010 is a valuable standard for our Guardsmen and women and urge a favorable report on this measure.

Yours, respectfully

Patrick Guibao

Patrick J. Guibao
Chair
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