



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

January 27, 2020

The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Alonzo T. Washington
Vice Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairwoman Kaiser and Vice Chairman Washington,

I write to express support for the Instant Ticket Lottery Machines for Homeless Veterans Act, introduced by Delegate Carol Krimm as HB0131 in the Maryland House of Delegates and by Senator Ron Young as SB0059 in the Maryland Senate.

Veteran homelessness is a problem across our nation. Estimates from the Department of Veterans Affairs indicate that 37,085 United States veterans experienced homelessness in January 2019 alone.¹ As someone whose father served our country, I have worked to address this crisis on a federal level by passing bipartisan legislation to provide more resources to former service members. However, I believe that eliminating veteran homelessness will take both state and federal action.

As Senator Young testified, approximately 2,000 veterans touched Maryland's homeless programs in 2017. By the end of the year, over 500 veterans remained homeless. At current funding levels, these programs are unable to provide every veteran with consistent and long-term support.

HB0131 would help end veteran homelessness in Maryland by expanding instant ticket lottery machines to Maryland's fraternal and sororal organizations. If 250 fraternal organizations were to be phased into this program, the bill could raise more than \$3 million annually for veterans programs. Under HB0131, the first 10% of net proceeds from the machines would go directly to the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The first \$100,000 would help the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs establish a digital communication network to connect veterans with people, programs, and organizations that can assist them.

¹ https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/pit_count.asp

I strongly urge you to advance this important legislation that would have a positive impact on veterans.

Thank you for your leadership to prioritize the needs of our veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Trone", with a stylized, cursive script.

David Trone
Member of Congress