

Maryland Military Coalition SB0707 Written Testimo

Uploaded by: DAVID Dragics

Position: FAV



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: **Request for FAVORABLE Report** – SB0707 – Armed Forces – Support of Military Families and Addition of Space Force

Dear Chairman Feldman and distinguished members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) and as its Legislative Director, I write to recommend a FAVORABLE report by the Committee on SB0707 – *Armed Forces – Support of Military Families and Addition of Space Force* sponsored by Senator Michael Jackson. This legislation adds the Space Force to certain provisions of Maryland's code related to the armed forces and includes the military spouse under the rights and protections provided in the federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501 et seq.).

Adding the Space Force to Maryland's code aligns it with 10 U.S. Code § 101 (4) – Definitions, which states that the "term 'armed forces' means the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, **Space Force**, and Coast Guard." By including "military spouse" in Article – Public Safety, Section 13-704.1 aligns the Maryland Code with federal law and supports the Moore-Miller Administration's Year of the Military Families.

The Maryland Military Coalition **supports SB0707** and asks the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee for a **FAVORABLE report**. These changes will update the Maryland Code.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups, representing over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers, and survivors.

We want to thank Senator Michael Jackson for his continuing commitment to the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

David L. Dragics
COL USA (Ret)
Legislative Director

Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition

James P. Monahan
Air Force Sergeants Association

Elwood R. Raphael Gray
American Minority Veterans Research Project

Lynda A. Gask
Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service

Sheldon Freedberg
Distinguished Flying Cross Association

Sheldon Freedberg
Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Emmett R. Robert
Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Charles E. Spitzer
Military Order of the Purple Heart

M. L. Messer
National Association for Black Veterans

Christian Andreasen
NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

Catherine L. McGraw
Society of Military Widows

M. Blackwell
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Steph P. May
American Military Society

W. W. Allen
Association of the United States Navy

Wilbur B. Fisher
Disabled American Veterans

Phyllis J. Collins
Fleet Reserve Association

Steve L. Blocker
Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association

Robert J. Linton
Military Officers Association of America

E. J. ...
Montford Point Marines of America

Michael P. Hays
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

John S. ...
Reserve Organization of America

E. J. ...
National Active and Retired Federal Employees
Veterans Affairs Directorate, NARFE MD

Tubman Testimony MG Birckhead 28 Feb 24 final.pdf

Uploaded by: Janeen Birckhead

Position: FAV

Word Count: 346

Amendment Testimony for SB 707 / HB 1026

For Major General Janeen L. Birckhead

Good afternoon, Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment.

A sincere “thank you” to Senator Jackson for amending SB 707 to provide for a posthumous commission of certain distinguished civilians to the Maryland Defense Force.

I am honored to exercise my authority ... to recommend to the Governor ... the posthumous commission of Harriet Tubman, a Volunteer Soldier of the Union Army ... whose extraordinary accomplishments ... contributed to victory ... in the war to preserve our great nation.

I have long looked with pride to Harriet Tubman, a fellow Maryland native – my role model for her courage and values-based leadership.

I have come to understand that it is not enough to tell her story in small circles, and to privately share our admiration.

It's time to publicly – loudly -- and officially declare that Harriet Tubman earned the respect of our nation.

A century and a half later, we can reject the cultural blinders that dismissed her because she was a Black Woman and despite her many contributions to the war effort -

- Nursing and training nurses for battlefield medicine ...
- Risking everything to scout and recruit a spy network behind enemy lines,
- Advising Union commanders,

- Leading a dangerous military raid behind enemy lines – described at the time by General Rufus Saxton as –

“the only military command in American history wherein a woman, black or white, led the raid, and under whose inspiration it was originated and conducted.”

I propose that we signal respect and honor with the designation of ‘General.’

- A General must organize, direct, and accomplish major actions with strategic effect.

- A General inspires others to exceed their own vision ... to endeavor beyond what they might themselves attempt ... to accomplish together something that is seemingly impossible.

This describes Harriet Tubman.

Let us celebrate her record of valor ... service ... and contribution to our freedoms ... and the promise of equal opportunity.

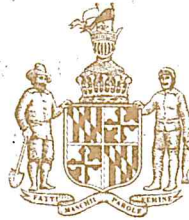
I invite your support in commissioning Harriet Tubman to the status of General Officer.

2024JacksonTestimonySB707.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Jackson

Position: FWA

MICHAEL A. JACKSON
Legislative District 27
Calvert, Charles and
Prince George's Counties



Annapolis Office
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Suite 3 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3700 · 301-858-3700
800-492-7122 Ext. 3700
Michael.Jackson@senate.state.md.us

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Pensions

Public Safety, Transportation, and
Environment

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

District Office
250 Merrimac Court
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678

TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 707
ARMED FORCES – SUPPORT OF MILITARY FAMILIES
AND ADDITION OF SPACE FORCE
EDUCATION, ENERGY, & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 707 is a very straightforward bill that makes a few simple requested changes relating to the assistance of military families. Primarily, the legislation adds the United States Space Force to State legislative references that include the other branches of service.

Additionally, the bill makes a corrective change to extend employment protections to Maryland residents serving in the National Guard of neighboring states who are called to duty by the Governor (of a neighboring state) for periods of less than 14 days. It alters the State provision of the Service Members Civil Relief Act to allow military spouses to terminate things like cable agreements or gym memberships on behalf of their spouse should they be deployed or transferred out of State. Then finally, with the requested amendment that I've submitted to the committee, the bill would allow our Governor to award certain posthumous commissions, appointments, and promotions in the Maryland Defense Force.

This is a simple, yet needed, bill that I strongly believe will provide a great benefit to our servicemembers and their families.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 707.



SB0707/373425/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

08 FEB 24
08:35:29

BY: Senator Jackson

(To be offered in the Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 707

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 9, after "Program;" insert "authorizing the Governor to award certain commissions, appointments, or promotions posthumously;".

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 4, in line 9, strike "Before" and substitute "EXCEPT FOR A COMMISSION, AN APPOINTMENT, OR A PROMOTION AWARDED UNDER SUBSECTION (F) OF THIS SECTION, BEFORE"; and after line 25, insert:

"(F) THE GOVERNOR MAY AWARD A COMMISSION, AN APPOINTMENT, OR A PROMOTION UNDER THIS SECTION POSTHUMOUSLY."