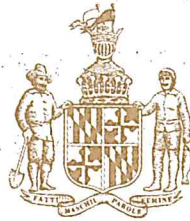


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TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 707

***ARMED FORCES – SUPPORT OF MILITARY FAMILIES
AND ADDITION OF SPACE FORCE***

HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

MARCH 26, 2024

Chair Pena Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison 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.