



MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
VETERANS CAUCUS

TO: Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk  
Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Maryland Veterans Caucus, House Membership

DATE: February 19, 2024

RE: **HB1026 -Armed Forces - Support of Military Families and Addition of Space Force**

The Maryland Veterans Caucus, House Membership respectfully requests a favorable report on **HB1026 - Armed Forces - Support of Military Families and Addition of Space Force**. This bill was sponsored by Delegate Edith Patterson. It requests the inclusion of the United States Space Force within the definition of armed forces, to broaden support for the "armed forces" by including all uniformed services and military families to be equally represented under all state laws defining "military service", "military retiree", and "veteran." **HB1026** works to protect service members and their dependents as consumers beyond the federal Service Members' Civil Relief Act (SCRA). Finally, **HB1026** adds Space Force and members of the National Guard to the definition of "military-connected student" for the purposes of the Purple Star Schools Program.

The Veterans Caucus mission is to study, develop, and promote legislation designed to improve the quality of life for veterans in the State of Maryland in the areas of employment, education, economics, training, and health. And to assist the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs in achieving its mission and goals, on behalf of the veterans in the State.

The Veterans Caucus Legislative Review Board offers and **recommends support and a favorable report of HB1026.**

Thank you,

*Mike Rogers*

Delegate Mike Rogers  
House Chair, Veterans Caucus