

# Christopher B. Shank

February 12, 2024

The Honorable Joseline Pena- Melnyk  
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk:

I am writing to respectfully request a favorable report from your committee on House Bill 756 - General Provisions - State Flag - Casket of an Eligible Decedent, sponsored by Delegates Hutchinson and Anderton.

I appreciate Delegates Hutchinson and Anderton for introducing this piece of legislation. As a former member of the House of Delegates, Maryland Senate, and Governor Hogan's cabinet, it has truly been an honor for me to serve the citizens of Maryland and each institution I've been privileged to be elected/appointed to. I have never lost the sense of awe as I think of the history of this building and those before us and their contributions to the State.

In our often polarized political climate of today, I think it's more important than ever to respect tradition and honor public service. The legislation establishes a framework for a grateful state to recognize public servants at their burial by presenting family members with a Maryland state flag.

As with all institutions, the longer one stays around, the more funeral services for former friends and colleagues one attends. I believe a formal, simple procedure administered by the Secretary of State, who has jurisdiction over Maryland flag presentation, would be a cost-effective and appreciated way to honor past members of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

This legislation is a way to recognize that public service is still a noble calling and that those that serve, no matter what branch, or what party, are worthy of a final measure of thanks from a grateful state.

I would respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Shank