

VeteransCaucusLegislationSupportLetter_SB114.pdf

Uploaded by: Benjamin Brooks

Position: FAV



MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
VETERANS CAUCUS

March 24, 2025

Delegate CT Wilson, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
230-231 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB114, Maryland Department of Labor – Licenses – Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits

Hearing Date: March 26, 2025

Dear Chairman Wilson,

Please let this letter serve as notice of the support of the Maryland General Assembly Senate Veterans Caucus for Senate Bill 114.

After review by our respective legislative committee, the Senate Veterans Caucus believes that the above-mentioned legislation would provide a valuable benefit to the veterans of the State of Maryland and requests a favorable report.

With kindest regards,

Senator Benjamin Brooks
Senate Chair

cc: Senator Bryan Simonaire

Maryland Military Coalition SB0114 Economic Matter

Uploaded by: DAVID Dragics

Position: FAV



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

March 24, 2025

The Honorable C. T. Wilson
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Request for **FAVORABLE Report** – SB0114 – Maryland Department of Labor – Licenses –
Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits

Dear Chair Wilson and distinguished members of the Economic Matters Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC), I write to recommend a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on **SB0114 – Department of Labor – Licenses – Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits**, sponsored by Senator Bryan Simonaire. This bill authorizes units in the Maryland Department of Labor to establish a certain process to include a notation of veteran status on an occupational license. If the veteran agrees to have that notation applied, that individual also agrees to be contacted by appropriate Executive agencies regarding their eligibility for State or federal veteran benefits.

The MMC supports the intent and processes of this bill. It **recognizes veteran status and reduces the burden on individuals to prove their eligibility for State or federal veteran benefits**, saving them personal time and effort to do so. We applaud this step in making it easier for those who have served other than dishonorably.

The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports SB0114** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report from the Economic Matters Committee.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of 22 prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups. It represents over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers and survivors. Visit our website at <https://mdmilcoalition.org/>.

We want to thank Senator Simonaire for sponsoring this legislation and supporting the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

David L. Dragics
COL (Ret), U.S. Army
Legislative Director



Member Organizations of the Maryland Military Coalition

Air Force Sergeants Association

American Military Society

American Minority Veterans Research Project

Association of the United States Navy

Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service

Disabled American Veterans

Fleet Reserve Association of Annapolis

Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A

Maryland Air National Guard Retirees' Association

National Active and Retired Federal Employees, Maryland Veterans

Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Military Officers Association of America

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Military Order of the World Wars

Montford Point Marines of America

National Association of Black Veterans

National Active and Retired Federal Employees, Maryland Veterans

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

Platoon 22

Reserve Organization of America

Society of Military Widows

Veterans of Foreign Wars

SB114 House.pdf

Uploaded by: James Campbell

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SB 114 Maryland Department of Labor – Licenses – Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits

FAVORABLE

House Economic Matters Committee

March 26, 2025

Good afternoon, Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and members of the House Economic Matters Committee. My name is Jim Campbell President Emeritus for AARP Maryland and a former Maryland State Delegate.

I chair the Veterans committee and am here to support SB 114 by Senators Simonaire and Jackson. AARP has four areas of focus serving members of the military including caregiving, fighting fraud, helping with career and employment opportunities through the Veterans and Military Spouse Job Center and access to benefits.

What does the bill do?

This bill authorizes units in the Maryland Department of Labor to include a notation of veteran status on an license or certificate issued by the Department.

How will it help veterans?

This is part of a package of bills by the sponsors designed to recognize military service by state employees and to help ensure they have awareness of access to earned benefits.

In recognizing the sacrifices, they made for our country, AARP believes we must ensure that our veterans have the most efficient access to the benefits they are entitled to receive. SB 114 will help achieve that goal and we urge a favorable report. Please feel free to contact Tammy Bresnahan, Senior State Director of Advocacy at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.



SB 114 Senator Simonaire_FAV_ECM.pdf

Uploaded by: Kara Contino

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BRYAN W. SIMONAIRE
Legislative District 31
Anne Arundel County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and
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The Senate of Maryland ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB 114 - Maryland Department of Labor - Licenses - Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits

I am Senator Bryan Simonaire presenting SB 114.

I worked with the Department of Labor and the military community on this consensus legislation. It basically allows a veteran to put a 'Veteran notation' on their professional Labor license.

First, let me say this is enabling legislation for all its departmental licensing boards, and setups the framework if the Department implements it on one or more of its boards.

I have worked with the Department and flexibility is key to success and this bill provides that flexibility.

This bill does two main things:

- 1) Enables one or more of the Department's licensing boards to issue a professional license or certificate with the "Veteran" notation placed on it, and
- 2) If enabled, it establishes an outreach to the veteran if they want the Veteran notation and the applicant consents to being contacted by appropriate Executive Branch agencies regarding the applicant's eligibility for State or federal veterans' benefits.

This may sound familiar as this is what is done for the MVA driver licenses. Driver license applicants can have a veteran's notation placed on their driver license and be contacted by the Department of Veterans and Military Families regarding available veteran benefits.

The only difference is that this legislation is enabling.

The advantage to this approach is the Department knows which boards this would work on best and could even pilot it on a few before rolling it out on more or all their boards.

While the MVA program has been hugely popular, Maryland has a long way to go to reach our veterans as less than 50% of our veteran population is taking advantage the MVA program.

That's why it is imperative we use as many methods as possible to reach out to our veterans. This legislation provides one more tool to reach out to veterans while also providing additional benefits to the veteran community.

Additionally, in Maryland, we are looking to do everything we can to help reduce veteran suicide. One of the key factors is avoiding isolation.

This legislation provides multiple benefits, including reducing isolation:

1. This will help with networking and reducing isolation as more people including other veterans will see these licensees are veterans and hopefully reach out more to them.
 - a. One of the many factors of veterans' suicide is isolation especially as it pertains to a veterans' own service and experiences. This will allow for public awareness of veterans through thanking them for their service, other veterans seeing it and talking with them and re-enforcing they are not alone.
2. It provides another tool to reach out to our veteran population with their consent through using their contact information to share eligible benefits with them,
3. It is another avenue for the public to show appreciation for their service, and
4. Lastly, it also provides potential financial benefits to our veteran as many customers are more likely to hire a veteran, repeat as a customer or just give a bigger tip for their service, where applicable.

If you think about it, you can't beat this is a low-cost investment with all its potential benefits.

For all these reasons, I ask for your favorable consideration.