



**THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
Department of Maryland, Inc.

The War Memorial Building, Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
410-752-1405

January 29, 2025

David Heredia, Jr.  
Commander, Department of Maryland  
The American Legion  
101 N. Gay Street, Suite E  
Baltimore, MD, 21202

The Honorable Bryan W. Simonaire  
Maryland State Senate  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Michael A. Jackson  
Maryland State Senate  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

cc: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Subject: Support for Maryland SB 48 – Veteran Identification on State-Issued ID Cards

Dear Senators Simonaire and Jackson,

On behalf of The American Legion Department of Maryland and our over 42,000 members, I would like to express our full support for Senate Bill 48 (SB 48). This legislation represents a meaningful and practical step toward honoring Maryland's nearly 350,000 veterans by providing them with the opportunity to have their veteran status officially recognized on state-issued identification cards.

This measure is not simply about convenience; it is about respect, recognition, and ensuring veterans can access the resources and benefits they have earned through their service to this country. A designation of veteran status on state identification cards offers numerous benefits, including:

1. **Easier Access to Benefits:** Many veterans need to provide proof of their service to access programs, benefits, and services designed to support them. A state-issued ID with a veteran designation eliminates unnecessary barriers by serving as immediate and reliable proof of their status.
2. **Acknowledging Sacrifice:** Displaying veteran status on an ID is a visible and everyday reminder of the gratitude and respect Maryland has for those who served. It is a small but impactful way to honor their sacrifices.
3. **Enhancing Veteran Services:** By formalizing the identification of veterans, Maryland will be better equipped to connect them with local, state, and federal resources. This initiative also helps facilitate data collection to better understand and meet the needs of our veteran community.

As State Commander of The American Legion Department of Maryland, I have witnessed the challenges many veterans face in accessing their benefits and navigating available resources. While this bill addresses a practical need, its significance extends beyond functionality. It is a symbol of Maryland's commitment to honoring and supporting its veterans—not just in words but in action.

Furthermore, The American Legion, along with other veteran service organizations (VSOs) such as the VFW and DAV, stands ready to assist veterans in utilizing this important designation. Our accredited Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) are committed to helping veterans identify and access the benefits they are entitled to at no cost. SB 48 will make this process more streamlined and efficient, protecting the dignity of our veterans while enhancing their access to support systems.

We deeply appreciate your leadership in sponsoring this legislation and ensuring it moves forward. The American Legion Department of Maryland pledges its full support and urges the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to pass this bill swiftly.

Thank you for your continued advocacy for Maryland's veterans. Together, we can ensure that our state remains a leader in honoring and supporting those who have worn the uniform.

Sincerely,

*David Heredia Jr.*

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Commander, Department of Maryland  
The American Legion

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