



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

March 24, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Request for **FAVORABLE Report with Amendments** – SB0253 – Controlled Hazardous Substance Facility Permit – Research Facilities – Chemical Warfare Material Requirements

Dear Chair Korman and distinguished members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC), I write to recommend a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on **SB0253 – Controlled Hazardous Substance Facility Permit – Research Facilities – Chemical Warfare Material Requirements**, at the request of the Maryland Department of Commerce. This bill provides that certain provisions of the law regarding chemical warfare material requirements under a controlled hazardous substance facility permit do not apply to certain research facilities under certain circumstances. This bill applies only to the U.S. Army's Chemical and Biological Center (CBC) at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Maryland.

As pointed out in the attached letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Threat Reduction and Arms Control of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense to the Executive Office of the Governor, APG is "the nation's treaty-designated single small-scale facility," the only place in the United States where "chemical agents at the quantities needed for defense research, development, and testing" can be fabricated and stored.

The MMC **strongly supports SB0253** and asks the Environment and Transportation Committee for a **FAVORABLE report with Amendments**. Passing this bill would support both the defense community and veterans in Maryland, who comprise a large portion of the workforce at APG.

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/>.

Respectfully,

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

Attachment



NUCLEAR, CHEMICAL, AND
BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAMS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3050 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3050

Mr. Brad Fallon, Deputy Legislative Officer
Executive Office of the Governor
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Fallon,

As the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Threat Reduction and Arms Control, I oversee the U.S. Chemical Demilitarization Program as well as several portfolios that sponsor technology development at our nation's center for chemical and biological weapons defense research and development, the U.S. Army's Chemical and Biological Center (CBC) at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Maryland. The Department of Defense (DoD) considers the acceleration of research, development, prototyping, and testing to be a national defense priority and critical to the protection of our warfighters.

Adversaries such as North Korea, Russia, Iran, and China are only becoming more brazen in their development and use of WMD. The DoD must develop and field technologies that protect our troops from these weapons and give them the ability to defeat, disable or destroy them before they can be used against us or our allies.

The CBC possesses unique engineering expertise to accelerate the design, testing, prototyping, and fielding of chemical agent destruction solutions needed by our warfighters. They have robust test facilities and environmental and safety programs. They also have a long and demonstrated history of performing safe and environmentally compliant chemical weapons-related research and development. Importantly, APG hosts a unique national asset: the nation's treaty-designated single small-scale facility. As such, APG is the only place in the country where we can fabricate and store chemical agents at the quantities needed for defense research, development, and testing.

The CBC routinely develops and tests new thermal destruction technologies to support warfighter needs to destroy chemical and biological agents in tactical environments. It is critical that we maintain the ability to perform needed research, development, prototyping, and testing in support of defense and counterproliferation priorities. I appreciate your support to ensure this unique and critically important capability is sustained at APG.

Thank you,

Kingston Reif

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Threat Reduction and Arms Control