



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 27, 2026

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, Appropriations Committee
120 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Request for **FAVORABLE Report** – HB0720 – Higher Education – Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship – Repeal of Termination Date

Dear Chair Barnes and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition¹ (MMC), I write to request a **FAVORABLE Report** by the Committee on **HB0720 – Higher Education – Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship – Repeal of Termination Date** sponsored by Delegate Edith J. Patterson. This bill repeals the prohibition of awarding the initial scholarship after June 30, 2030, or renewing it after the same date.

The MMC supports the elimination of the termination date of this scholarship, which provides significant financial assistance to Maryland residents who are veterans, active-duty members, or their spouses and children, and who qualify for the award. It supplements federal veterans' education benefits, thereby reducing the financial burden on the awardee. Elimination of the termination date signifies Maryland's commitment to those residents who served in the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflict.

The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports HB0720** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report from the Appropriations Committee.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of 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. For further information, visit our website at <https://mdmilcoalition.org/>.

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

Respectfully,

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

¹ See attached list of member organizations.



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

Reserve Organization of America

Society of Military Widows

Veterans of Foreign Wars