



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 17, 2026

The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins
The Honorable Jessica Feldmark
House Ways and Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Request for a **Favorable Report** – HB 783—Washington County—Property Tax Credit—
Platoon 22

Dear Chairman Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark and Distinguished Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

On behalf of the Maryland Military Coalition and as their Communications Director, I write to recommend a **Favorable Report** by the Committee on **HB 783—Washington County—Property Tax Credit—Platoon 22**. This bill requires that Washington County and a municipal corporation in Washington County to grant, by law, a property tax credit against county and municipal corporation property tax imposed on real property owned by Platoon 22.

As some background, I'm a scientist, and I generally reach for statistics, references, something proven and replicable to build my case. However, when it comes to the issue of veteran homelessness it's like trying to capture smoke in your hands. You can see it, smell it, "know it" ...but you can't wrap your hands around it. If you look at the Department of Veterans and Military Families' [2024 Annual Report](#), it tells you that nationwide, veterans experiencing homelessness has experienced a 55.6% reduction since 2010. Here in Maryland, the VA Maryland Health Care System successfully housed 611 veterans and engaged 536 unsheltered veterans, connecting them with housing and essential wraparound services. What it doesn't tell you is the number of currently "unhoused veterans", the polite term for homeless veterans, living in Maryland, because the answer is—we really don't know. However, at an Operation Annapolis breakfast on February 2nd, Acting Secretary Ed Rothstein said that unhoused veterans are his biggest problem, and that it keeps him up at night. It keeps me up at night too.

In the absence of data, I asked the Montgomery County Veterans Commission to help me find out the facts. While this is not a randomized, controlled study, here is what I learned:

- Most counties have a cobbled together system of dealing with unsheltered veterans, which includes churches, missions, shelters, and occasionally a non-profit. Most are, at

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the best, temporary services, often providing support for only 48 hours. Unhoused veterans shuttle around through the services, never staying in one place long enough to accomplish much. They get “two hots and a cot”—dinner, breakfast and a cot to sleep on. If they are lucky, they might get a toiletry kit and a chance to shower and wash their clothes.

- Montgomery County participates in the HUD-VASH collaborative program, which pairs HUD’s Choice Voucher rental assistance with VA case management and supportive services. When vouchers run out, homeless veterans are placed in shelters. Currently it is estimated that **the county has 50 unhoused veterans**. In its 2027 priorities, the Commission asks for permanent affordable house for the homeless veteran population.
- Howard County has one non-profit partner that has units rented with subsidies for those experiencing homelessness. “We do not pay property taxes on our affordable units as a nonprofit”. They have no designated veteran housing. “We often have to move them [veterans] out of county because Howard County does not have VASH vouchers and has a waitlist for affordable housing”. The county estimates that they have 3 unhoused veterans.
- Prince Georges’ county does not work with nonprofits to house unhoused veterans.
- Frederick County does not have VASH vouchers. They often move their unhoused veterans out of county when existing resources are full.
- Washington County does not have vouchers. They often send their homeless to other counties, like Montgomery, who do have vouchers.

Platoon 22 was organized in 2014 as a 501(c)(3) to “[win the war against veteran suicide](#)” through the successful reintegration of service members and their families by assembling critical resources, providing peer support and developing transitional programs. Part of its transitional programming is a property in Washington County that has six, one-person apartments, used as temporary housing for veterans. The apartments provide a veteran with stability and privacy, while the transitional services help with job, application and interview skills, medical and dental assistance, food and clothing, to name just a few.

Maryland § 7–202 (b)(1) “...property is not subject to property tax if the property is
(i) is necessary for and actually used exclusively for a charitable or educational purpose to promote the general welfare of the people of the State,...; and,
(ii) is own by:

2. a nonprofit charitable, fraternal, education, or literary organization

As required by law, Platoon 22 applied to the supervisor of Washington County for a property tax exemption. The application was denied.

Having done case management for over 20 years, I know a well-run system of services. Platoon 22 is a model veteran community organization offering a host of transitional services. It is the only veteran service organization offering temporary housing in the entire state. As a non-profit, they should not incur property tax as the property is used exclusively to provide housing for veterans.

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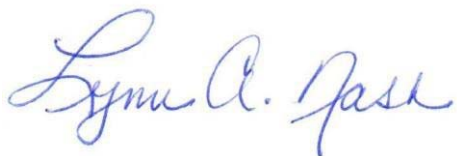
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The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports** HB 783—Washington County—Property Tax Credit—Platoon 22 and asks you for a **FAVORABLE report**.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of 22 prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups, representing over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers, and survivors. To learn more, please visit our [website](#).

The Coalition thanks the Washington County Delegation for sponsoring this important legislation, while raising awareness about unhoused veterans and the limited options available in Maryland to provide services to them. No veteran should ever have to worry about where he or she will sleep. We also recognize Platoon 22 for the wide array of services that they provide. They are an exemplar organization, whose model should be replicated around the state.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN
CAPT (R), U.S. Public Health Service
Communications Director

1 Attachment – Member Organizations of the Maryland Military Coalition



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

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 Association of 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