

UNOFFICIAL COPY OF HOUSE BILL 3

P1

(6lr0348)

**ENROLLED BILL**

-- *Ways and Means and Health and Government Operations/  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and Budget and Taxation* --

Introduced by **The Speaker and Delegates Brown, Hixson, ~~and Hammen~~  
Hammen, Aumann, Barkley, Bartlett, Barve, Benson, Bobo, Boteler,  
Bozman, Branch, Bromwell, Bronrott, Burns, Cadden, Cane, Cardin,  
G. Clagett, V. Clagett, Conroy, Conway, D. Davis, Donoghue, Doory,  
Dumais, Edwards, Elliott, Elmore, Feldman, Frank, Gaines, Glassman,  
Goodwin, Gordon, Griffith, Gutierrez, Harrison, Haynes, Healey, Heller,  
Holmes, Howard, Hubbard, James, Jameson, Jennings, Jones, Kaiser,  
Kelley, King, Krebs, Krysiak, Kullen, Lawton, Lee, Leopold, Levy, Love,  
Madaleno, Malone, Mandel, Mayer, McComas, McConkey, McHale,  
McIntosh, McKee, McMillan, Menes, Moe, Montgomery, Morhaim,  
Murray, Nathan-Pulliam, Niemann, O'Donnell, Paige, Parker,  
Patterson, Pendergrass, Petzold, Proctor, Pugh, Quinter, Rosenberg,  
Shank, Smigiel, Sophocleus, Sossi, Stern, Trueschler, F. Turner,  
V. Turner, Vallario, Vaughn, Zirkin, Boschert, Cryor, C. Davis, Gilleland,  
Marriott, Myers, Ramirez, Ross, Goldwater, Costa, Kach, Kohl,  
McDonough, Oaks, Rudolph, and Weldon**

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this  
\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock, \_\_\_\_ M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker.

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Veterans Advocacy and Education Act of 2006**

1 FOR the purpose of altering the eligibility requirements for the Edward T. Conroy  
2 Memorial Scholarship Program to include certain children of certain members of  
3 the armed forces; altering certain disability criteria under the Program; making  
4 stylistic changes; ~~defining a certain term~~; establishing the Veterans of the  
5 Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship; establishing application  
6 requirements for participation in the scholarship; requiring a certain  
7 scholarship to supplement certain federal education benefits; providing that  
8 each scholarship may be used for certain educational expenses; prohibiting the  
9 annual amount of a scholarship from exceeding a certain percentage of the  
10 equivalent tuition and certain fees of certain institutions of higher education;  
11 requiring a scholarship recipient to maintain a certain grade point average;  
12 providing for the duration of the scholarship; requiring funds for the scholarship  
13 to be provided in the annual budget of the Maryland Higher Education  
14 Commission; ~~requiring that certain funds provided for scholarships be used in~~  
15 ~~subsequent fiscal years under certain circumstances~~; requiring scholarship  
16 recipients to file for certain federal and State financial aid by a certain date;  
17 prohibiting certain scholarships from being awarded after a certain date;  
18 permitting certain scholarships to be renewed after a certain date; authorizing  
19 legislative scholarship funds to be used for certain purposes; establishing a  
20 Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Fund in the  
21 Commission; directing the Commission to use certain gifts and grants for the  
22 Fund in a certain manner; requiring the Commission to prepare a certain  
23 annual report regarding the Fund; ~~requiring that the Commission transfer~~  
24 ~~certain unspent Senatorial and Delegate scholarship funds to fund Veterans of~~  
25 ~~the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarships~~; establishing a certain  
26 Outreach and Advocacy Program in the Department of Veterans Affairs;  
27 requiring the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to appoint a certain director of the  
28 Program; providing a salary for and the duties of the director; requiring the  
29 Program to help veterans and their dependents become aware of and access  
30 certain benefits to which they are entitled under federal, State, and local law;  
31 requiring the director to develop and implement a certain veterans outreach  
32 plan; authorizing the director to enter into certain contracts and work with  
33 certain governmental units and with certain organizations to provide certain  
34 information about certain services for veterans; requiring the director to develop  
35 certain mechanisms for outreach; requiring the Department to develop and  
36 maintain a certain database; requiring the Department, in conjunction with  
37 certain organizations to develop a certain survey; requiring the Outreach and  
38 Advocacy Program to seek out and track certain veterans and provide certain  
39 veterans with certain information; requiring the Secretary to submit a report on  
40 or before a certain date of each year to the Governor and the General Assembly;  
41 providing a certain death benefit to the surviving spouse, child, dependent  
42 parent, or estate of certain individuals serving in the Afghanistan or Iraq  
43 conflict under certain circumstances; establishing a Task Force to Study State  
44 Assistance to Veterans; providing for the composition of the Task Force;  
45 providing for the appointment of the chairman of the Task Force; providing for  
46 the staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting members of the Task Force from  
47 receiving compensation but entitling members to reimbursement of certain  
48 expenses; requiring the Task Force to study certain issues and make certain

1 recommendations; requiring the Task Force to submit certain reports to the  
2 Governor and the General Assembly on or before certain dates; providing for the  
3 application of a certain provision of this Act; providing for the termination of a  
4 certain provision of this Act; and generally relating to education, benefits, and  
5 benefits assistance for veterans and veterans' families.

6 ~~BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,~~  
7 ~~Article - Education~~  
8 ~~Section 18-407, 18-501, and 18-601(a) and (d)~~  
9 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~  
10 ~~(2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)~~

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
12 Article - Education  
13 Section 18-601(c)  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

16 *BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,*  
17 *Article - Education*  
18 *Section 18-601(d)*  
19 *Annotated Code of Maryland*  
20 *(2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)*

21 ~~BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,~~  
22 ~~Article - Education~~  
23 ~~Section 18-601(d)~~  
24 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~  
25 ~~(2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)~~

26 BY adding to  
27 Article - Education  
28 Section 18-604  
29 Annotated Code of Maryland  
30 (2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

31 BY adding to  
32 Article - State Government  
33 Section 9-940 through 9-943 to be under the new part "Part V. Outreach and  
34 Advocacy Program"; and 9-946 to be under the new part "Part VI.  
35 Reporting"  
36 Annotated Code of Maryland  
37 (2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

1 BY adding to  
 2 Article - Public Safety  
 3 Section 1-202(a-1)  
 4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 5 (2003 Volume and 2005 Supplement)

6 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 7 Article - Public Safety  
 8 Section 1-202(b)  
 9 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 10 (2003 Volume and 2005 Supplement)

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
 12 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

13 **Article - Education**

14 ~~18-407.~~

15 ~~(a) Each Senator shall award all of his senatorial scholarships on or before~~  
 16 ~~September 1 of each year.~~

17 ~~(b) If any Senator fails to award all of his scholarships on or before September~~  
 18 ~~1 of each year, the Commission shall make the remaining awards to applicants from~~  
 19 ~~the Senator's legislative district who:~~

20 ~~(1) Scored highest on the competitive examination; or~~

21 ~~(2) Are attending an eligible institution and have completed at least 1~~  
 22 ~~year in good academic standing.~~

23 ~~(c) The Office shall:~~

24 ~~(1) Notify each Senator of the applicants to whom it awards the~~  
 25 ~~Senator's scholarships; and~~

26 ~~(2) Announce publicly the names of all recipients.~~

27 ~~(d) To the extent a scholarship awarded under § 18-404 of this subtitle is not~~  
 28 ~~used by a student, moneys appropriated to the Commission for that award not used~~  
 29 ~~by the end of the fiscal year shall be retained by the Commission for use by the~~  
 30 ~~awarding Senator in the Senatorial Scholarship Program during subsequent fiscal~~  
 31 ~~years.~~

32 ~~(E) FOR THE TERM OF OFFICE ENDING IN JANUARY 2007 ONLY, THE~~  
 33 ~~COMMISSION SHALL TRANSFER ANY UNSPENT SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS REMAINING AT~~  
 34 ~~THE END OF A SENATOR'S TERM TO FUND THE VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND~~

1 ~~IRAQ CONFLICTS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER § 18-604 OF THIS~~  
 2 ~~TITLE.~~

3 ~~18-501.~~

4 (a) ~~There is a program of Delegate Scholarships in this State that are awarded~~  
 5 ~~under this subtitle.~~

6 (b) ~~A scholarship awarded under this subtitle may be used at:~~

7 (1) ~~An eligible institution for a program of undergraduate, graduate, or~~  
 8 ~~professional studies;~~

9 (2) ~~An accredited undergraduate, graduate, or professional institution~~  
 10 ~~outside the State, if:~~

11 (i) ~~The applicant will be studying in an academic area that is not~~  
 12 ~~available in this State; or~~

13 (ii) ~~1. The applicant is disabled;~~

14 ~~2. The applicant will be studying at an institution outside~~  
 15 ~~the State that makes special provisions for disabled students; and~~

16 ~~3. Comparable special provisions are not available to that~~  
 17 ~~student at an institution in the State; and~~

18 (3) ~~A private career school within the State that is approved by the~~  
 19 ~~Maryland Higher Education Commission under § 11-202 of this article and that is~~  
 20 ~~accredited by a national accrediting association that is approved by the United States~~  
 21 ~~Department of Education.~~

22 (c) ~~Moneys appropriated to the Commission for scholarships awarded under~~  
 23 ~~this section that are not used by the end of the fiscal year shall be retained by the~~  
 24 ~~Commission for use by the awarding Delegate in the Delegate Scholarship Program~~  
 25 ~~during subsequent fiscal years.~~

26 (D) ~~FOR THE TERM OF OFFICE ENDING IN JANUARY 2007 ONLY, THE~~  
 27 ~~COMMISSION SHALL TRANSFER ANY UNSPENT SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS REMAINING AT~~  
 28 ~~THE END OF A DELEGATE'S TERM TO FUND THE VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN~~  
 29 ~~AND IRAQ CONFLICTS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER § 18-604 OF~~  
 30 ~~THIS TITLE.~~

31 ~~18-601.~~

32 (a) (1) ~~In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.~~

33 (2) ~~"Disabled public safety employee" means a State or local public safety~~  
 34 ~~employee who sustains an injury in the line of duty that:~~

1 ~~(i)~~ Precludes the individual from continuing to serve or be  
 2 employed as a State or local public safety employee; and

3 ~~(ii)~~ In the case of a volunteer member of a fire department or  
 4 ambulance or rescue company or squad, precludes the member from continuing to be  
 5 employed in the nonpublic safety occupation in which the member is engaged at the  
 6 time of the injury.

7 ~~(3)~~ "SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITY" MEANS A DISABILITY THAT WAS  
 8 INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE MILITARY AND IN THE  
 9 LINE OF DUTY.

10 ~~[(3)]~~ ~~(4)~~ "Surviving spouse" means a person who has not remarried.

11 ~~[(4)]~~ ~~(5)~~ "State or local public safety employee" means a person who is:

12 ~~(i)~~ A career or volunteer member of a:

13 ~~1.~~ Fire department;

14 ~~2.~~ Ambulance company or squad; or

15 ~~3.~~ Rescue company or squad;

16 ~~(ii)~~ A law enforcement officer;

17 ~~(iii)~~ A correctional officer; or

18 ~~(iv)~~ A member of the Maryland National Guard who was a resident  
 19 of this State at the time of death.

20 ~~[(5)]~~ ~~(6)~~ "Victim of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks" means a  
 21 Maryland resident who was killed as a result of the attacks on the World Trade  
 22 Center in New York City, the attack on the Pentagon in Virginia, or the crash of  
 23 United Airlines Flight 93 in Pennsylvania.

24 18-601.

25 (c) The Program is the Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program.

26 (d) A person may apply to the Office for a scholarship under this section if the  
 27 person:

28 (1) Except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, is a resident of  
 29 Maryland;

30 (2) (i) Is accepted for admission or enrolled in the regular  
 31 undergraduate, graduate or professional program at an eligible institution; or

1 (ii) Is enrolled in a 2-year terminal certificate program in which  
2 the course work is acceptable for transfer credit for an accredited baccalaureate  
3 program in an eligible institution; and

4 (3) (i) Is at least 16 years old and a son or daughter of a member of the  
5 armed forces who [was a resident of this State at the time the parent]:

6 1. Died [or was totally and permanently disabled] as a  
7 result of military service after December 7, 1941; [or]

8 2. SUFFERED A SERVICE CONNECTED 100% PERMANENT  
9 DISABILITY AFTER DECEMBER 7, 1941; OR

10 [2.] 3. Was declared to be a prisoner of war or missing in  
11 action, if that occurred on or after January 1, 1960 as a result of the Vietnam conflict,  
12 and if the child was born prior to or while the parent was a prisoner of war or missing  
13 in action;

14 (ii) Was a prisoner of war on or after January 1, 1960 as a result of  
15 the Vietnam conflict and was a resident of this State at the time the person was  
16 declared to be a prisoner of war or missing in action;

17 (iii) 1. Is at least 16 years old and a son or daughter of any State  
18 or local public safety employee killed in the line of duty; or

19 2. Is the surviving spouse of any State or local public safety  
20 employee killed in the line of duty;

21 (iv) Is a disabled public safety employee;

22 (v) Is a veteran, as defined under § 9-901 of the State Government  
23 Article, who:

24 1. Suffers a [service-related] SERVICE CONNECTED  
25 disability of 25% or greater; and

26 2. Has exhausted or is no longer eligible for federal veterans'  
27 educational benefits; or

28 (vi) Is at least 16 years old and a son or daughter of or the surviving  
29 spouse of a victim of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

30 18-604.

31 (A) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, AN INDIVIDUAL SERVED IN THE  
32 AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ CONFLICT IF THE INDIVIDUAL WAS A MEMBER OF THE  
33 UNIFORM SERVICES OF THE UNITED STATES WHO SERVED IN:

34 (1) AFGHANISTAN OR CONTIGUOUS AIR SPACE, AS DEFINED IN  
35 FEDERAL REGULATIONS, ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 24, 2001, AND BEFORE A TERMINAL  
36 DATE TO BE PRESCRIBED BY THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENSE; OR

1 (2) IRAQ OR CONTIGUOUS WATERS OR AIR SPACE, AS DEFINED IN  
2 FEDERAL REGULATIONS, ON OR AFTER MARCH 19, 2003, AND BEFORE A TERMINAL  
3 DATE TO BE PRESCRIBED BY THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

4 (B) THERE IS A VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ CONFLICTS  
5 SCHOLARSHIP.

6 (C) AN INDIVIDUAL MAY APPLY TO THE OFFICE FOR A SCHOLARSHIP UNDER  
7 THIS SECTION IF THE INDIVIDUAL:

8 (1) IS A RESIDENT OF MARYLAND;

9 (2) (I) IS ACCEPTED FOR ADMISSION OR ENROLLED IN THE REGULAR  
10 UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM AT AN ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION; OR

11 (II) IS ACCEPTED FOR ADMISSION OR ENROLLED IN A 2-YEAR  
12 ~~2-YEAR~~ TERMINAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN WHICH THE COURSE WORK IS  
13 ACCEPTABLE FOR TRANSFER CREDIT FOR AN ACCREDITED BACCALAUREATE  
14 PROGRAM IN AN ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION; AND

15 (3) (I) 1. IS A VETERAN, AS DEFINED UNDER § 9-901 OF THE STATE  
16 GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, WHO SERVED IN THE AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ CONFLICT;

17 2. IS AN ACTIVE DUTY MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES  
18 WHO SERVED IN THE AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ CONFLICT; OR

19 3. IS A MEMBER OF A RESERVE COMPONENT OF THE ARMED  
20 FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES OR THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD WHO WAS  
21 ACTIVATED AS A RESULT OF THE AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ CONFLICT DESCRIBED IN  
22 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION; OR

23 (II) IS A SON, DAUGHTER, OR SPOUSE OF:

24 1. A VETERAN OR ACTIVE DUTY MEMBER OF THE ARMED  
25 FORCES WHO IS SERVING OR HAS SERVED IN THE AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ CONFLICT;  
26 OR

27 2. A MEMBER OF THE RESERVE OR MARYLAND NATIONAL  
28 GUARD WHO WAS ACTIVATED AS A RESULT OF THE AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ CONFLICT  
29 DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

30 (D) A SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL SUPPLEMENT  
31 ANY FEDERAL EDUCATION BENEFITS FOR WHICH A RECIPIENT QUALIFIES AS A  
32 RESULT OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S MILITARY SERVICE OR STATUS AS A DEPENDENT OF A  
33 MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES OR OF A VETERAN OF THE ARMED FORCES.

34 (E) (1) EACH SCHOLARSHIP MAY BE USED, AT ANY ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION,  
35 TO PAY FOR EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES AS DEFINED BY THE OFFICE, INCLUDING:

36 (I) TUITION AND MANDATORY FEES; AND



1 (II) ROOM AND BOARD.

2 (2) THE ANNUAL AMOUNT OF A SCHOLARSHIP MAY NOT EXCEED 50% OF  
3 THE EQUIVALENT ANNUAL TUITION, MANDATORY FEES, AND ROOM AND BOARD OF A  
4 RESIDENT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AT THE 4-YEAR PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF  
5 HIGHER EDUCATION WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND, OTHER THAN  
6 THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY OF  
7 MARYLAND, BALTIMORE, WITH THE HIGHEST ANNUAL EXPENSES FOR A FULL-TIME  
8 RESIDENT UNDERGRADUATE.

9 (F) A SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SHALL MAINTAIN A GRADE POINT AVERAGE  
10 OF AT LEAST 2.5 ON A 4.0 SCALE.

11 (G) EACH RECIPIENT OF A SCHOLARSHIP UNDER THIS SECTION MAY HOLD  
12 THE AWARD FOR 5 YEARS OF FULL-TIME STUDY OR 8 YEARS OF PART-TIME STUDY.

13 (H) A SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SHALL FILE FOR FEDERAL AND STATE  
14 FINANCIAL AID BY MARCH 1 OF EACH YEAR.

15 (I) (1) THE OFFICE MAY NOT AWARD AN INITIAL SCHOLARSHIP TO AN  
16 INDIVIDUAL SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION ~~(C)(4)~~ (C)(3) OF THIS SECTION AFTER JUNE 30,  
17 2012.

18 (2) THE OFFICE MAY RENEW A SCHOLARSHIP AFTER JUNE 30, 2012, IF  
19 THE INDIVIDUAL RECEIVED AN INITIAL SCHOLARSHIP BEFORE THAT DATE.

20 (J) A SENATOR OR DELEGATE MAY AUTHORIZE THE OFFICE TO AWARD ALL  
21 OR A PORTION OF THE FUNDS AUTHORIZED UNDER SUBTITLES 4 AND 5 OF THIS  
22 TITLE TO ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS OF SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED UNDER THIS SECTION.

23 (K) (1) FUNDS FOR THE VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ  
24 CONFLICTS SCHOLARSHIP SHALL:

25 ~~(1)~~ BE AS PROVIDED IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE  
26 COMMISSION BY THE GOVERNOR; ~~AND~~

27 ~~(1)~~ INCLUDE FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER §§ 18-407(E) AND 18-501(D)  
28 OF THIS TITLE.

29 ~~(2)~~ MONEY APPROPRIATED FOR SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER THIS SECTION  
30 OR TRANSFERRED BY THE COMMISSION UNDER §§ 18-407(E) AND 18-501(D) OF THIS  
31 TITLE THAT IS NOT USED BY THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR:

32 ~~(1)~~ MAY NOT REVERT TO THE STATE TREASURY; AND

33 ~~(1)~~ SHALL BE USED TO AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER THIS  
34 SECTION DURING SUBSEQUENT FISCAL YEARS.

35 ~~(2)~~ ~~(1)~~ ~~(1)-(2)~~ (I) THERE IS A VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND  
36 IRAQ CONFLICTS SCHOLARSHIP FUND IN THE COMMISSION.

(II) THE COMMISSION:

1 MAY ACCEPT ANY GIFT OR GRANT FROM ANY PERSON OR  
2 CORPORATION FOR THE VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ CONFLICTS  
3 SCHOLARSHIP FUND;

5 2. SHALL USE ANY GIFT OR GRANT THAT IT RECEIVES FOR A  
6 SCHOLARSHIP FROM THE VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ CONFLICTS  
7 SCHOLARSHIP FUND; AND

8 3. SHALL DEPOSIT ANY GIFT OR GRANT THAT IT RECEIVES  
9 FOR THE VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ CONFLICTS SCHOLARSHIP  
10 FUND WITH THE STATE TREASURER IN A NONBUDGETED ACCOUNT.

11 ~~(3)~~ ~~(2)~~ (3) (I) AT THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR, THE COMMISSION  
12 SHALL PREPARE AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE VETERANS OF THE AFGHANISTAN AND  
13 IRAQ CONFLICTS SCHOLARSHIP FUND THAT INCLUDES AN ACCOUNTING OF ALL  
14 FINANCIAL RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES TO AND FROM THE FUND.

15 (II) THE COMMISSION SHALL SUBMIT A COPY OF THE REPORT TO  
16 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS PROVIDED UNDER § 2-1246 OF THE STATE  
17 GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

**Article - State Government**

19 9-938. RESERVED.

20 9-939. RESERVED.

**PART V. OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM.**

22 9-940.

23 (A) IN THIS PART, "PROGRAM" MEANS THE OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY  
24 PROGRAM.

25 (B) THERE IS AN OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT.

26 (C) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO ENSURE THAT:

27 (1) VETERANS ARE INFORMED OF THE SERVICES, BENEFITS, AND  
28 ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO THEM FROM THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT;  
29 AND

30 (2) GENERAL ISSUES RELATING TO VETERANS NEEDS ARE BROUGHT TO  
31 THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNOR AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ORDER FOR  
32 THEM TO BE ADDRESSED.

1 9-941.

2 (A) THE SECRETARY SHALL APPOINT A DIRECTOR FOR THE PROGRAM.

3 (B) THE DIRECTOR IS ENTITLED TO THE SALARY PROVIDED IN THE STATE  
4 BUDGET.

5 (C) THE DIRECTOR SHALL ADMINISTER AND COORDINATE THE PROGRAM.

6 9-942.

7 (A) THE OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM SHALL ACTIVELY HELP  
8 VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS BECOME AWARE OF AND ACCESS ANY SERVICE  
9 OR BENEFIT TO WHICH THEY ARE ENTITLED INCLUDING:

10 (1) TAX BENEFITS;

11 (2) HEALTH CARE BENEFITS;

12 (3) DISABILITY BENEFITS;

13 (4) PENSION BENEFITS; AND

14 (5) EDUCATION.

15 (B) THE DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM SHALL:

16 (1) SUPPORT VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS THROUGH THE  
17 SERVICE OR BENEFIT PROCESS; AND

18 (2) KEEP IN CONTACT WITH THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENTAL UNIT  
19 AS TO THE STATUS OF EACH CLAIM OF A VETERAN, A VETERAN'S DEPENDENT, OR A  
20 VETERAN'S SURVIVOR.

21 9-943.

22 (A) (1) FOR THE PURPOSES OF REACHING ANY VETERAN, VETERAN'S  
23 DEPENDENT, OR VETERAN'S SURVIVOR IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING  
24 SERVICES OR BENEFITS GRANTED BY THE LAW, THE DIRECTOR SHALL DEVELOP AND  
25 IMPLEMENT AN OUTREACH PLAN.

26 (2) IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT THE DIRECTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES  
27 UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE DIRECTOR MAY:

28 (I) ENTER INTO CONTRACTS; AND

29 (II) WORK WITH GOVERNMENTAL UNITS AND COMMUNITY-BASED  
30 ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE,  
31 THE DEPARTMENT OF AGING, FAITH-BASED GROUPS, VETERANS GROUPS, SENIOR  
32 CENTERS, ADULT DAY CARE CENTERS, INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, AND  
33 OTHER ENTITIES THE DIRECTOR CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.

1           ~~(3)     THE DIRECTOR SHALL WORK IN COLLABORATION WITH THE~~  
2 ~~MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION TO ACTIVELY HELP VETERANS AND~~  
3 ~~THEIR DEPENDENTS BECOME AWARE OF AND ACCESS EDUCATION AND TRAINING~~  
4 ~~BENEFITS.~~

5       (B)   (1)     THE DIRECTOR SHALL DEVELOP MECHANISMS FOR OUTREACH TO  
6 BE DISSEMINATED BY DIRECT MAIL AND THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED VETERANS  
7 ORGANIZATIONS, THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, THE DEPARTMENT OF  
8 HUMAN RESOURCES, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE, AND  
9 ANY OTHER STATE AGENCY OR UNIT THE DIRECTOR CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.

10           (2)     THE MECHANISMS FOR OUTREACH SHALL INCLUDE:

11                   (I)     THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PAMPHLET DESCRIBING THE  
12 SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM;

13                   (II)    A REGULAR NEWSLETTER;

14                   (III)   BROCHURES DESCRIBING VARIOUS BENEFITS OR ANY OTHER  
15 ISSUE OR BENEFIT OF INTEREST TO VETERANS OR THEIR DEPENDENTS; AND

16                   (IV)   OTHER MEASURES THE DIRECTOR CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.

17       (C)    THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A DATABASE OF  
18 VETERANS IN THE STATE.

19       (D)    THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE TYPES OF  
20 COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS LISTED IN SUBSECTION (A)(2) OF THIS  
21 SECTION, SHALL DEVELOP A SURVEY TO ASSIST IN IDENTIFYING VETERANS AND  
22 DEPENDENTS WHO MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR PENSION PROGRAMS.

23       (E)    THE PROGRAM SHALL:

24           (1)     IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTAL UNITS AND  
25 COMMUNITY-BASED GROUPS, SEEK OUT VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS WHO  
26 MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR PENSION PROGRAM BENEFITS; AND

27           (2)     PROVIDE WOUNDED OR DISABLED VETERANS WITH INFORMATION  
28 ON AVAILABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS AND SUPPORT IN OBTAINING THESE  
29 SERVICES AND BENEFITS.

30 9-944. RESERVED.

31 9-945. RESERVED.

1 PART VI. REPORTING.

2 9-946.

3 THE SECRETARY SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT BY DECEMBER 31 OF EACH YEAR TO  
4 THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1246 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT  
5 ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THAT INCLUDES:

6 (1) THE NUMBER OF:

7 (I) REQUESTS FOR HELP IN OBTAINING BENEFITS; AND

8 (II) VETERANS, VETERANS' DEPENDENTS, AND VETERANS'  
9 SURVIVORS HELPED BY THE OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM BY CATEGORY;

10 (2) THE BENEFITS OBTAINED THROUGH THE OUTREACH AND  
11 ADVOCACY PROGRAM BY CATEGORY;

12 (3) THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME IT TAKES TO PROCESS BENEFIT  
13 REQUESTS AND FOR A RECIPIENT TO ACCESS HEALTH BENEFITS;

14 (4) THE AVERAGE AMOUNT OF DISABILITY AND PENSION BENEFITS  
15 RECEIVED BY QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS IN THIS STATE COMPARED TO INDIVIDUALS  
16 IN OTHER STATES;

17 (5) A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE OUTREACH PLAN IN THE  
18 OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM;

19 (6) AN ACCOUNT OF THE COSTS OF OPERATING THE OUTREACH AND  
20 ADVOCACY PROGRAM;

21 (7) A STATUS OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR, EFFICACY OF,  
22 EFFICIENCY OF, AND LEVEL OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR EACH OF THE  
23 FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

24 (I) CEMETERY;

25 (II) MEMORIAL;

26 (III) SERVICE;

27 (IV) VETERANS HOMES; AND

28 (V) OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY;

29 (8) A GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF VETERANS IN THE  
30 STATE;

31 (9) THE ESTIMATED IMPACT CURRENT MILITARY OPERATIONS ARE  
32 LIKELY TO HAVE ON THE NEEDS OF VETERANS IN THE FUTURE;

1 (10) THE STATUS OF FEDERAL VETERANS PROGRAMS AS THEY RELATE  
2 TO MARYLAND VETERANS; AND

3 (11) ANY OTHER ISSUES CONCERNING VETERANS THAT THE SECRETARY  
4 CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland  
6 read as follows:

7 **Article - Public Safety**

8 1-202.

9 (A-1) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, AN INDIVIDUAL SERVED IN THE  
10 AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ CONFLICT IF THE INDIVIDUAL WAS A MEMBER OF THE  
11 UNIFORM SERVICES OF THE UNITED STATES WHO SERVED IN:

12 (1) AFGHANISTAN OR CONTIGUOUS AIR SPACE, AS DEFINED IN  
13 FEDERAL REGULATIONS, ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 24, 2001, AND BEFORE A TERMINAL  
14 DATE TO BE PRESCRIBED BY THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENSE; OR

15 (2) IRAQ OR CONTIGUOUS WATERS OR AIR SPACE, AS DEFINED IN  
16 FEDERAL REGULATIONS, ON OR AFTER MARCH 19, 2003, AND BEFORE A TERMINAL  
17 DATE TO BE PRESCRIBED BY THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

18 (b) (1) Subject to subsection (c) of this section and paragraph (2) of this  
19 subsection, a death benefit of \$50,000 shall be paid to the surviving spouse, child,  
20 dependent parent, or estate of each of the following individuals who is killed or dies in  
21 the performance of duties on or after July 1, 1989:

22 (i) a law enforcement officer;

23 (ii) a correctional officer;

24 (iii) a volunteer or career firefighter or rescue squad member; [or]

25 (iv) a sworn member of the office of State Fire Marshal; OR

26 (V) A MARYLAND RESIDENT WHO WAS A MEMBER OF THE  
27 UNIFORM SERVICES OF THE UNITED STATES SERVING IN THE AFGHANISTAN OR  
28 IRAQ CONFLICT.

29 (2) For fiscal year 1999, and for each following fiscal year, the death  
30 benefit provided in the prior fiscal year shall be adjusted by any change in the  
31 calendar year preceding the fiscal year in the Consumer Price Index (all urban  
32 customers - United States city average - all items), as published by the United States  
33 Bureau of Labor Statistics.

34 (3) A death benefit under this subsection is in addition to:

- 1 (i) any workers' compensation benefits;
- 2 (ii) the proceeds of any form of life insurance, regardless of who  
3 paid the premiums on the insurance; and
- 4 (iii) the funeral benefit provided under subsection (d) of this section.

5 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

6 (a) There is a Task Force to Study State Assistance to Veterans.

7 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

- 8 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of  
9 the Senate;
- 10 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of  
11 the House;
- 12 (3) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or the Secretary's designee;
- 13 (4) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's  
14 designee;
- 15 (5) the Adjutant General of the Military, or the Adjutant General's  
16 designee; and
- 17 (6) the following seven members, jointly appointed by the President of  
18 the Senate and the Speaker of the House:
  - 19 (i) one member of the Maryland Congressional Delegation, or the  
20 member's designee;
  - 21 (ii) one member of the Maryland Veterans Commission;
  - 22 (iii) two veterans, one of whom is disabled and one of whom has  
23 separated from military service within the past 2 years;
  - 24 (iv) one individual who is the surviving spouse or parent of a  
25 veteran;
  - 26 (v) one individual with knowledge of providing health care services  
27 to veterans; and
  - 28 (vi) a representative of the Maryland Higher Education  
29 Commission.

30 (c) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall jointly  
31 designate the chairman of the Task Force.

1 (d) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall make all  
2 appointments on or before July 1, 2006.

3 (e) The members of the Task Force shall represent geographic, ethnic, and  
4 cultural differences throughout the State.

5 (f) The Task Force may request assistance and information from any  
6 government unit or other expert that the Task Force considers appropriate.

7 (g) The Department of Legislative Services shall provide staff for the Task  
8 Force.

9 (h) A member of the Task Force:

10 (1) may not receive compensation; but

11 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State  
12 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

13 (i) The Task Force shall study and make recommendations on veterans issues  
14 including:

15 (1) the efficacy of the services and benefits for veterans to determine how  
16 well the services and benefits help eligible individuals obtain benefits and whether  
17 these are being obtained in a timely manner;

18 (2) whether there are enough advocate offices to efficiently help all  
19 eligible individuals receive assistance;

20 (3) the potential impact of the increased number of veterans returning  
21 from military service in recent conflicts on services provided by the State;

22 (4) what services are provided to veterans, veterans' families and  
23 survivors and what services need to be provided including medical care, hospice care,  
24 and mental health services;

25 (5) the feasibility of establishing homes for veterans in the Crownsville  
26 Hospital Center and other regions of the State;

27 (6) the feasibility of establishing regional outreach and advocacy centers  
28 around the State and using existing service centers as outreach and advocacy centers;

29 (7) the identification of State and federal benefits and services and how  
30 to make them more comprehensive;

31 (8) how to improve outreach to women who are eligible to receive  
32 veteran-related benefits; and

33 (9) any issue regarding benefits and assistance to veterans that the Task  
34 Force determines is necessary.



1 (j) The Task Force shall submit an interim report to the Governor and the  
2 General Assembly, on or before December 1, 2006, and report its final findings and  
3 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State  
4 Government Article, the General Assembly, on or before December 1, 2007.

5 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act shall  
6 be construed to apply retroactively and shall be applied to a Maryland resident who  
7 was a member of the uniform services of the United States serving in the Afghanistan  
8 conflict on or after October 24, 2001, or the Iraq conflict on or after March 19, 2003.

9 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
10 June 1, 2006. Section 3 of this Act shall remain effective for a period of 1 year, 6  
11 months and 1 day and, at the end of December 1, 2007, with no further action  
12 required by the General Assembly, Section 3 of this Act shall be abrogated and of no  
13 further force and effect.