

# SENATE BILL 709

F1, F2

6lr0737  
CF HB 623

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By: **Senators Carozza, Brooks, Harris, Salling, Simonaire, and Watson**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Purple Star Schools Program and Purple Star Colleges Program**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the definition of “military–connected student” under the Purple  
4 Star Schools Program to conform with certain terms defined under State law;  
5 establishing the Purple Star Colleges Program to recognize certain colleges that  
6 provide strong services and support for military–connected students; and generally  
7 relating to the establishment of the Purple Star Colleges Program.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
9 Article – Education  
10 Section 7–129(a)  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland  
12 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

13 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
14 Article – Education  
15 Section 10–101(a), (c), and (h) through (j)  
16 Annotated Code of Maryland  
17 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY adding to  
19 Article – Education  
20 Section 11–2001 through 11–2003 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 20. Purple  
21 Star Colleges Program”  
22 Annotated Code of Maryland  
23 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

26 **Article – Education**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 7–129.

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

3 (2) “Military–connected student” means a student who is a dependent of:

4 (i) [An active duty uniformed services member;

5 (ii) A member of a reserve component] **A SERVICE MEMBER**; or

6 [(iii)] **(II) A SERVICE member** [described in item (i) or (ii) of this  
7 paragraph] who was killed in the line of duty.

8 (3) “Program” means the Purple Star Schools Program.

9 10–101.

10 (a) In this division the following words have the meanings indicated.

11 (c) “Commission” means the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

12 (h) (1) “Institution of higher education” means an institution of postsecondary  
13 education that generally limits enrollment to graduates of secondary schools, and awards  
14 degrees at either the associate, baccalaureate, or graduate level.

15 (2) “Institution of higher education” includes public, private nonprofit, and  
16 for–profit institutions of higher education.

17 (i) (1) “Institution of postsecondary education” means a school or other  
18 institution that offers an educational program in the State for individuals who are at least  
19 16 years old and who have graduated from or left elementary or secondary school.

20 (2) “Institution of postsecondary education” does not include:

21 (i) Any adult education, evening high school, or high school  
22 equivalence program conducted by a public school system of the State; or

23 (ii) Any apprenticeship or on–the–job training program subject to  
24 approval by the Apprenticeship and Training Council.

25 (j) “Private career school” means a privately owned and privately operated  
26 institution of postsecondary education other than an institution of higher education that  
27 furnishes or offers to furnish programs, whether or not requiring a payment of tuition or  
28 fee, for the purpose of training, retraining, or upgrading individuals for gainful employment  
29 as skilled or semiskilled workers or technicians in recognized occupations or in new and  
30 emerging occupations.

**SUBTITLE 20. PURPLE STAR COLLEGES PROGRAM.**

**11-2001.**

**(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.**

**(B) “COLLEGE” MEANS:**

**(1) AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION; OR**

**(2) A PRIVATE CAREER SCHOOL.**

**(C) “MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENT” MEANS A STUDENT WHO IS:**

**(1) A SERVICE MEMBER;**

**(2) A VETERAN; OR**

**(3) A SPOUSE OR DEPENDENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED IN ITEM (1) OR (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

**(D) “PROGRAM” MEANS THE PURPLE STAR COLLEGES PROGRAM.**

**11-2002.**

**(A) THERE IS A PURPLE STAR COLLEGES PROGRAM.**

**(B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO RECOGNIZE COLLEGES THAT PROVIDE STRONG SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS.**

**(C) THE COMMISSION SHALL ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM.**

**11-2003.**

**(A) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, THE COMMISSION SHALL DESIGNATE A COLLEGE AS A PURPLE STAR COLLEGE IF THE COLLEGE APPLIES AND MEETS THE CRITERIA ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION FOR A PURPLE STAR COLLEGE.**

**(B) AT A MINIMUM, THE COMMISSION’S CRITERIA FOR A PURPLE STAR COLLEGE SHALL REQUIRE A COLLEGE TO:**

**(1) DESIGNATE A STAFF MEMBER AS A UNIFORMED SERVICES LIAISON, WHOSE DUTIES SHALL INCLUDE:**

**(I) IDENTIFYING MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS WHO ARE NEWLY ENROLLED AT THE COLLEGE;**

**(II) SERVING AS THE POINT OF CONTACT BETWEEN THE COLLEGE AND NEWLY ENROLLED MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS;**

**(III) DETERMINING APPROPRIATE COLLEGE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO NEWLY ENROLLED MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS;**

**(IV) ASSISTING IN COORDINATING COLLEGE PROGRAMS FOR NEWLY ENROLLED MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS; AND**

**(V) GENERALLY ASSISTING IN A MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENT'S TRANSITION TO A NEW COLLEGE;**

**(2) ESTABLISH ON THE COLLEGE'S WEBSITE AN EASILY ACCESSIBLE WEBPAGE THAT INCLUDES LINKS TO RESOURCES FOR MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS, INCLUDING LINKS TO INFORMATION REGARDING:**

**(I) RELOCATION TO, ENROLLMENT AT, REGISTRATION AT, AND TRANSFERRING RECORDS TO THE COLLEGE;**

**(II) ACADEMIC PLANNING, COURSE SEQUENCES, AND ADVANCED COURSES AVAILABLE AT THE COLLEGE; AND**

**(III) COUNSELING AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS TRANSITIONING INTO THE COLLEGE;**

**(3) MAINTAIN A TRANSITION PROGRAM LED BY STUDENTS, IF APPROPRIATE, THAT ASSISTS MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS ENROLLED AT THE COLLEGE; AND**

**(4) OFFER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF MEMBERS ON ISSUES RELATED TO MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS TRANSFERRING TO NEW COLLEGES.**

**(C) A COLLEGE MAY PARTNER WITH ITS GOVERNING BODY TO FULFILL THE COMMISSION'S CRITERIA TO QUALIFY AS A PURPLE STAR COLLEGE.**

1           (D) THE COMMISSION, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MARYLAND COLLEGE  
2 COLLABORATION FOR STUDENT VETERANS COMMISSION, SHALL ADOPT  
3 REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS SUBTITLE.

4           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
5 1, 2026.