

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 270 (Chair, Government, Labor, and Elections
Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Veterans and
Military Families)
Government, Labor, and Elections

Military Family Inclusion Act

This departmental bill alters the membership of the Maryland Commission on Caregiving, the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Veterans Trust, the Maryland Veterans Commission, and the Maryland Youth Advisory Council. The bill also specifies how representative seats and organizations may be removed from the Maryland Veterans Commission.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Altering the composition of the specified entities does not materially affect government operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Veterans and Military Families (DVMMF) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law:

Maryland Commission on Caregiving

The Maryland Commission on Caregiving, staffed by the Department of Human Services (DHS), coordinates statewide planning, development, and implementation of family

caregiver support services. The commission consists of 19 members, including representatives from DHS and other State agencies, consumers of respite care services, and service providers.

The bill adds one family caregiver of a service-disabled veteran as a member of the commission.

Board of Trustees of the Maryland Veterans Trust

Chapter 742 of 2009 established the Maryland Veterans Trust and the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund (MVTF) to provide monetary and other assistance to veterans and their families and public and private programs that support veterans and their families. The Board of Trustees of the trust oversees and solicits funds for MVTF. The board consists of 11 members, including a member of the House of Delegates and a member of the Senate.

Under the bill, the commission members from the House of Delegates and the Senate serve as *ex officio* trustees. The bill also clarifies that a majority of the *voting* trustees is a quorum.

Maryland Veterans Commission

The Maryland Veterans Commission advises the Secretary of Veterans and Military Families on all matters pertaining to veterans' issues. The commission, consisting of 29 voting members and honorary nonvoting members, meets quarterly. DVMF provides staff for the commission.

The bill removes American Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc. and the Polish Legion of American Veterans from the list of veterans' organizations that submit names for appointment to the Governor and adds to that list an organization representing military families. The bill also repeals the requirement that one member of the commission be an honorary nonvoting member appointed from a list of individuals submitted to the Governor by the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association.

The bill specifies that an organization's representative seat may be removed if the organization fails to appoint a new commissioner for two continuous years and that an organization may be removed from the commission if a representative from the organization is not recommended by that organization.

The bill also repeals language that prohibits a new organization from being eligible for representation on the commission, by appointment of the Governor, unless it is congressionally chartered.

Maryland Youth Advisory Council

The Maryland Youth Advisory Council, comprised of 24 youth members, examines issues of importance to youth, including (1) education; (2) a safe learning environment; (3) employment opportunities; (4) strategies to increase youth participation in local and State government; (5) the environment; (6) homelessness; (7) suicide prevention; (8) substance use and underage drinking; (9) poverty; and (10) educational accessibility issues for students with disabilities.

The bill adds to the council one youth who has an immediate family member who is a service member, appointed by DVMF.

Background: DVMF advises that the bill is intended to update, streamline, and ensure military family representation on various commissions and councils, as well as to clarify the membership composition, appointment types, and organizational removal procedures for the Maryland Veterans Commission.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years; however, legislation with similar provisions has been proposed. For example, see SB 254 and HB 196 of 2025.

Designated Cross File: SB 192 (Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Veterans and Military Families) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Department of Veterans and Military Families; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 20, 2026
sj/jc

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Military Family Inclusion Act

BILL NUMBER: HB 270

PREPARED BY: Peter Pantzer

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

 X WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND
SMALL
BUSINESS

OR

 WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL
BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS