

Good Afternoon Chairman Brave and Honorable Members of the Maryland House of Delegates serving on the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I am writing this in order to convey my full support for House Bill 755. As a former Nurse at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center; I can say from first-hand experience how important it is for our wounded veterans to engage in activities outside of typical medical procedures and appointments as a form of therapeutic treatment. Medical research suggests that activities like fishing allows wounded veterans to engage with nature while interacting with other veterans. This active engagement and interpersonal interaction is vital for both the physical and mental health of our wounded and disabled veterans.

A vast array of medical conditions currently facing our veterans does not definitely dictate a 100% disability rating by the Veterans Administration. The percentages of disability is managed on a case by case basis. As such, some might misunderstand a shift from 100% disability to 80% disability for a free fishing license to be arbitrary. The 20% difference is not an arbitrary number for those disabled veterans seeking therapeutic activities for their mental health beyond zoom call therapy sessions. These Veterans have given so much of themselves to protecting and serving our country, please give them the opportunity to heal their wounds and enjoy our beautiful home that is Maryland. Please return a favorable vote for our 80% disabled veterans who seek a positive form of therapy by simply communing with nature.

Very Respectfully,

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