

Hello Delegate Pendagrass and committee,

My name is Laura Goodpaster. David Perez was my son. I am here today asking for a favorable vote for HB874 Maryland Veterans Trust Fund – CAM for Veterans Grant Program – Established (David Perez Military Heroes Act (End 22 a Day) .

David Perez was born and raised in Maryland. When he was 17, he joined the military. He served in the Maryland Army National Guard for 11 years, he was a combat vet, and after he served his country he decided to dedicate his life to helping other veterans who served. David struggled with PTSD after his deployment in 2006, and in the fall of 2020 we lost David from the battle with his own challenges. Had this fund been available to him I believe he may still be with us.

As a military veteran myself I have seen the results of our veterans not having access to therapies that will help them to cope. That is why I support this bill, to honor the work that David did and to keep his memory, dedication, and passion to this issue alive as well as provide the struggling veterans in our State with assistance for alternative forms of treatment for their time serving our country.

Thank you