



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 874 -
Maryland Veterans Trust Fund – CAM for
Veterans Grant Program – Established (David Peerez Military Heroes Act
(End 22 as Day)

Madam Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk and distinguished members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee... The American Legion Department of Maryland strongly supports for House Bill 874.

This bill would provide needed funds for rehabilitative care for those veterans who have been injured psychologically by such trauma as PTSD and other stringent mental disorders and stresses from military service many occurring in combat zones.

The American Legion fervently believes this measure would be a positive first step towards curbing and, hopefully, eliminating veteran suicide now believed to be as high as 22 per day, family turmoil and upheaval, homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction among former service personnel and, unfortunately in some cases, criminal activity and imprisonment.

We view the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, administered by our State Department of Veterans Affairs as the ideal vehicle for dispensing the needed revenues to those in need and to qualified professionals which we envision would be accomplished under the section 9-914.4.4 (E) (1) **APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROESESSES; AND (2) ELIGIBIITY STANDARDS.**

In closing, we believe House Bill 874 is a vital measure and a major step toward the healing for community members who live in daily desperation. The American Legion and its over 46,000 members in the State's 23 Counties and Baltimore City urgently request a favorable report and we thank Delegate Cox for sponsoring this vital bill.

Yours, respectfully,

Patrick Guibao

Parick J. Guibao
Chair, The Legislative Commission
The AMERICAN LEGION
Department of Maryland