

Chairwoman Kaiser and members of the Ways & Means Committee.

First, let me say it is an honor to be here and able to speak to you about something that I am passionate about. Today you will hear from the current State President for the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks Lodges located in Maryland and I know he shares my same passion and enthusiasm. I know he will do an amazing job of explaining who we are what we do and the financial impact COVID-19 has had on our Lodges. I just want to tell my story...

My name is Brandon Corey Bradley and I am a resident of Anne Arundel County and lifelong Marylander.

I joined the Severna Park Elks Lodge a little over 11 years ago because I recognized I wanted to be an active member of my community, I want to be a better American, a better Marylander and I truly believe it takes a village to raise a child.

After going through initiation, I was approached about volunteering to cook at a few events. Little did I know that would be just the start of my amazing journey with the Elks. Since joining, I have held multiple positions within my lodge, the local district and the state association. I have given countless hours helping those less fortunate, working with veterans, molding our youth, donating to first responders and raising my children to be young Americans I can be proud of. My two children, who are 9 and 11, they have been raised in the Elks. They enjoy coming to the Lodge, giving back to the community and are proud of their father and the things we have accomplished. I want them to know and understand what it means to give back.

I sit here today as the Government Relations chair for the State of Maryland. It is a position that carries many responsibilities, like speaking here today, but it is also extremely rewarding. I try my best to spread the word about all the great things we have done and will do going forward. Lodges in the State have been impactful with special needs children, bringing drug awareness and prevention to their community, empowering Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, supporting multiple Veterans Organizations across the State by assisting in locating housing, furniture and supplies and have donated hundreds of thousands in scholarships just to name a few things. I stand proud today with many of the men and women seated here, knowing that at the end of 2019 fiscal year, we contributed more than \$6.5 million dollars back to communities in the State of Maryland in the form of volunteer hours, miles traveled and cash contributions.

Supporting House Bill 371 would allow the Lodges on the Western Shore of Maryland to continue the work they are already doing. It would increase the charity that is already spread throughout Maryland communities. Charity that comes in the form of Holiday baskets so that needy families can provide a Christmas meal, or taking a group of veterans to a baseball game on a summers day or donating backpacks and snacks to local schools. Support for House Bill 371 is a means to allow the Elks to continue the great work we have done for more than 150 years.

Thank you for hearing my testimony today.