

In **Support** of **HB 273**, “Defend the Guard,”

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House Health and Government Operations Committee,

I would like to speak with you regarding a new bill that is currently under consideration. Like most Americans, 9/11 was a traumatic event that greatly impacted my view of the world.

I was ready to support the effort and give our federal government the tools they needed to ensure another 9/11 would not happen again. Over the course of the last 18 years, the federal government has used the events of 9/11 to greatly increase their power, most notably via the bulk collection of data/surveillance and the endless involvement in foreign conflicts under the guise of the “war on terror.”

It has become apparent to anyone willing to look at the facts, that our federal government has routinely lied to the American people in order to further their endless foreign engagements. The recent impeachment hearings have made one thing very clear; it does not matter who is president, the national security state will not allow any deviation from the status quo.

In fact, the national security apparatus is more than willing to subvert the will of the American people to further the foreign policy of the last 30 years. In fact, it doesn’t seem to matter who is elected, we get John McCain or Hillary Clinton’s foreign policy.

I am imploring you, as our elected representatives, to consider supporting the Defend the Guard Act. If we cannot stop the federal government from sending our men and women in service to potentially give the ultimate sacrifice, we can certainly stop sending our National Guard members to engage in such foreign conflicts where there is not an official declaration of war from Congress.

This would be a win for all Marylanders, and it would be an excellent example for the rest of the country.

Respectfully,

Joseph Bray