

March 2, 2022

House Bill 1257

Dear Madam Chair Atterberry, Vice Chair Washington, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

I am here today to represent the nearly 20K Elks that make up the Maryland, Delaware and District of Columbia Elks Association. As big of an honor as that is, I am also here to represent myself as an active member of my community, husband and a father.

My name is Brandon Corey Bradley and I am a resident of Anne Arundel County and a lifelong Marylander. I became an Elk over a decade ago to serve my community, become a model Marylander and better myself as an American.

Elks across the State of Maryland have helped shaped communities by donating hours helping those less fortunate, volunteering at veteran's hospitals, supporting first responders and mentoring our youth to be their best. Even during the height of the pandemic, Elks Lodges were still able to contribute more than \$3.9M back into the community through volunteer hours, miles driven, cash and non-cash donations. Everyone always says we should strive to do better and I can stand before this committee and say as Elks we are committed to our communities and that means doing everything in our power to make them better and that includes support homeless veterans.

Lodges across Maryland currently back four major programs that supports veterans. These programs are Army of Hope, Welcome Home project, Hometown Heroes and Feed-a-Vet. While each of these programs has its own mission and goals, the idea is to support our veterans and end homeless by giving them resources and avenues for assistance.

House Bill 1257 will allow Elks Lodges and other similar fraternal organizations on the Western shore to provide to veterans through Instant Ticket Lottery Machines (ITLM) located in our lodges and facilities. These machines will give the state funds to support programs that are

important to organizations like the Elks. These programs include but are not limited to supporting single parent veterans, placing female veterans in a safe home and assisting veterans who have become victims of domestic abuse.

Supporting House Bill 1257 will allow Lodges on the Western Shore of Maryland to continue the work they are already doing. It will only increase the charity that is currently being spread throughout communities in Maryland. Charity which comes in the form of taking a group of veterans to a baseball game, providing iPads to Green Street Veterans Hospital or simply celebrating Veterans Day by saying thank you over a home cooked meal. Supporting House Bill 1257 is a means to ending veteran homelessness in Maryland. I and the 20K Elks I represent would appreciate your support and a favorable vote.

Respectfully,

Brandon Corey Bradley

Government Relations Chair – Maryland, Delaware and District of Columbia Elks Association