



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of H.B. 1162

**Study on the Utilization of the Expedited Licensing Process for
Service Members, Veterans, and Military Spouses**

I'm requesting a favorable report on H.B. 1162, the *Study on the Utilization of the Expedited Licensing Process for Service Members, Veterans, and Military Spouses*.

Currently, Maryland law requires varying state agencies to help active military personnel, veterans, and their spouses obtain **expedited** occupational and professional licenses, registrations, and certificates in recognition of their military training and experience.

It also requires occupational units throughout the State government to give **credit** to service members for relevant military training, education, and experience in connection with any one specific license.

For example, if a veteran served in the military as a nurse and wished to transition the associated credentialing and experience to the same occupation in civilian life, not only will their initial license or certificate application processed by the Board of Nursing (Board) be **expedited** within 15 business days after receiving all the required documentation for a completed application but the Board could also **credit** any training and education provided by the military and completed by the veteran toward any training or educational requirements for the license or certificate in civilian life.

This is a great opportunity and should continue throughout the state.

However, even though these opportunities exist within the state of Maryland for service members, veterans, and their spouses, many are not aware of their existence and therefore do not take advantage of them. This is not only a missed opportunity for the state to gain highly experienced workers, but it is also a crucial avenue for service members, veterans, and their spouses to transition from service to civilian life.

To this end, H.B. 1162 is a study, conducted by the Department of Labor and the Department of Veteran's Affairs, to examine several main questions:

1. The **number** of service members, veterans, and military spouses that have used the expedited process and have had credit for military experience, education, or training applied to license requirements;
2. The **type** of experience, education and training for which credit may be awarded for licensure and **whether or not** the experience, education or training is considered substantially equivalent to the requirements associated with the license they are seeking;
3. If used, **sample applications forms** to request credit for experience, education, or training be applied to license requirements;
4. Information on **existing and potential** outreach activities relating to the expedited licensing process and experience, education, and training being applied to license requirements;
5. **Suggested best practices** for disseminating the information regarding expedited applications for license and the types and amount of credit offered for experience, education, and training;

6. **Increasing visibility** on State websites of information regarding the expedited applications and the types and amount of credit offered for experience, education, and training; and
7. A **comparison** with similar programs and outreach efforts in other states.

The study should be completed, and findings be presented, to the Maryland General Assembly on or before June 30, 2024.

Furthermore, you should have before you a friendly amendment to also examine the following:

1. The timeframes for the processing of the expedited applications, as we've heard they are not being completed within the indicated timeframes required; and
2. Where the applications are housed/located and how interested parties can access them as we've heard this is a real concern. In some cases, folks are waiting more than a month to receive an application and that is after several attempts on their part to connect with the correct personnel to have it sent.

The intent of H.B. 1162 is to not only ascertain how affective these programs are but to gauge where we can make adjusts to better serve and provide for our military community and their family.

As stated before, this is not only an investment in the Maryland economy as it will undoubtedly bring a higher number of qualified workers to the workforce, but it will also increase opportunity for our military community to lead successful careers well beyond service.

Thank you for your time, and I request a favorable report on H.B. 1162.