

In-Person Testimony by Patrick J. Guibao on Senate Bill 286
Before the Education, Energy and Environment and Committee
February 14, 2023

Good afternoon members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee. I am Patrick Guibao representing State's Fleet Reserve Association comprising six branches in the State and representing over 7,000 members.

We strongly endorse Senate Bill 286 on the fervent belief that the eternal resting place for a veteran and his or her spouse should be together and without expense for either.

Presently, a veteran is interred without burial expense in one of the five cemeteries operated by the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs. Regretfully, burying the spouse is a cost of \$897 dollars, up \$51 dollars from just a few years ago.

The tenets presented in this bill mirror the requirements of the U.S. Department of Veterans Administration which operate cemeteries throughout the nation.

We have no opposition to the burial of dependents as long as adequate space exists for future veteran burials.

In closing, we join our colleagues in The American Legion with a combined membership throughout Maryland is over 142,000 urge the Education, Environment and Energy Committee to render a favorable report on SB 286 in support of family unity eternally and deeply commend Senator Simonaire for his consistent, relentless support for the veteran community. We are grateful also the other sponsors of this necessary measure.

