

HB250-DisabledVeteransPlates_KEaton-Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Ken Eaton

Position: FAV



ABATE OF MARYLAND, INC.

Dedicated to Freedom of the Road & Responsible Motorcycle Legislation

To: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chairman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Ken Eaton, Director, Executive Director, ABATE of Maryland, Inc.

Date: February 7, 2023

Re: **HB 250** - Vehicle Laws – Disabled Veteran Registration Plates – Issuance

Position: **FAVORABLE: SUPPORT**

I am a motorcyclist, a coastal / civil engineer, a farmer, a registered voter, a member of the American Legion Riders, and a member of ABATE of Maryland, Inc., the largest motorcyclist rights organization in the state of Maryland. ABATE represents the approximately 121,000 on road motorcycles that are registered in Maryland. We have chapters throughout the state and our members include a diverse cross-section of motorcycle riders in Maryland. We **SUPPORT HB250**.

Many motorcycle riders throughout the Country are Veterans. Quite a few are disabled for a variety of conditions and reasons. Any chance we get to recognize their service, dedication and sacrifice to this nation should be pursued.

ABATE of Maryland, Inc. SUPPORTs HB 250 - Vehicle Laws – Disabled Veteran Registration Plates – Issuance. We urge the committee to consider a **Favorable** vote.

Thank you!

Kenneth B. Eaton, Executive Director
director@abateofmd.org
ABATE of Maryland, Inc.

HB 250 Written Testimony (Moses) (4).pdf

Uploaded by: Lawrence Moses

Position: FAV



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

Environment and Transportation Committee

Statement of Mike Moses
Maryland Military Coalition

HB 250 – Vehicle Laws - Disabled Veteran Registration Plates - Issuance
February 9, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Madam Chair, Vice Chair and Honorable Committee Members.

My name is Mike Moses, Director of the Maryland Military Coalition and resident of Charles County, Waldorf, Maryland, and Navy Veteran.

Many Veterans after serving in the Vietnam War, Persian Gulf, and the Iraq and Afghanistan conflict have struggled when they returned home. Transitioning back into civilian life is by far their biggest battle. During the changeover, Veterans worry about bills, food, and other small things on a daily basis.

On countless occasions during the transition, the home population expresses its appreciation with statements of gratitude such as “Thank You For Your Service.” And, there are benefits from federal and state governments, though some are with limitations.

One particular limitation in our state, pertaining to the honoring of our veterans, is the one with the Motor Vehicle Administration that allows ONLY a Veteran, who is 100% disabled, free registration for all license fees.

As a former Southern Maryland Area Veteran Service Officer, I have coached veterans using the **VA** E-Benefit Data Base and VetPro in addressing Veteran Claims. In the state of Maryland there are 38,161 Veterans who have received a rating of at least 50% to 90% disability according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and these veterans should be given this Veteran preference.

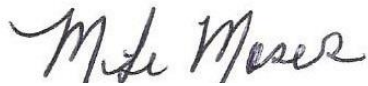
Let us continue to articulate our thanks to our disabled veterans’ service with a positive vote for HB 250 and **lower the free registration to those vehicle owners with military service-related injuries of at least 50%** as designated or classified by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

Environment and Transportation Committee
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The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups, representing over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers, and survivors.

We **strongly support HB 250** and ask for the committee's **favorable support**.

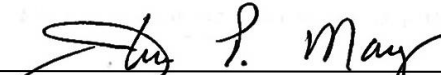
Respectfully,

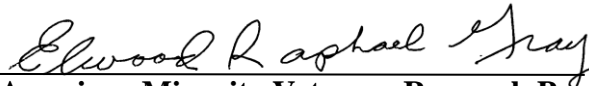
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Moses". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Moses, Director
U.S. Navy Veteran


Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition


Air Force Sergeants Association


American Military Society



American Minority Veterans Research Project

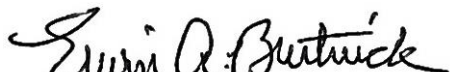

Association of the United States Navy



Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service



Disabled American Veterans



Distinguished Flying Cross Association



Fleet Reserve Association


Jewish War Veterans of the USA


Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association


Military Officers Association of America


Military Order of the Purple Heart



Montford Point Marines of America


National Association for Black Veterans


Naval Enlisted Reserve Association


NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers


Reserve Organization of America


Society of Military Widows


Veterans of Foreign Wars

FINAL - H.B. 250 Testimony and Letter of Support -

Uploaded by: Mike Griffith

Position: FAV

H.B. 250 – 2.9.23 – Environment and Transportation

TESTIMONY

Thank you, Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee. It's great to be presenting here today!

I'm requesting a favorable report on H.B. 250, the *Vehicle Laws – Disabled Veteran Registration Plates – Issuance*.

Currently in Maryland, disabled veterans can qualify for and receive a disabled veteran's license plate if the veteran has a total (100%) disability rating as a result of their military service. Upon qualification, they will receive a license plate with the words "Disabled Veteran" printed on it, and the registration for the plate will be waived.

The license plate, when affixed to a vehicle, provides a safety cue not only for the disabled veteran operating the vehicle but also for outside personnel who may need to approach the vehicle in any one given situation.

Because of the important safety role this license plate designation serves in helping a disabled veteran navigate civilian life, it is my intent with H.B. 250 to lower the qualifying threshold from 100% disabled to 50% disabled so more disabled veterans can apply and qualify.

Lowering the threshold to 50%, and not another specific percentage point, is intentional and important. Let me explain.

Whether their disabilities range from physical impairments to internal struggles and challenges related to the unseen like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a disabled veteran can suffer from any number of military service-related injuries. Having the designated plate affixed to their vehicle will help the disabled veteran and community operate in a safer and more understanding environment.

For example, the mid-level threshold for PTSD within a veteran is 50%, meaning at this level veterans can experience pronounced problems at work and in everyday life. These problems can range from significant reduction in productivity to a risk of **frequent panic attacks and difficulty following simple instructions**. If the veteran has a 30% PTSD rating combined with physical disabilities to reach 50%, this combination could potentially be severe enough that if **outside personnel, such as a first responder, was to approach the vehicle**, this action could trigger a PTSD episode within the disabled veteran and create an unsafe situation for all concerned parties.

However, if the vehicle displayed a “Disabled Veteran” license plate, the first responder (or other personnel) would see this cue and quickly determine the best method for connecting with the disabled veteran, one that does not pose a threat and decreases the chances of an episode. This in turn would create a safer environment for the disabled veteran and the community at large.

As of this past January, around 17,000 disabled veterans in Maryland had an active “Disabled Veteran” license plate. These would be veterans currently at the 100% disabled threshold.

However, if the threshold was lowered to 50% disabled as written in H.B. 250, roughly an additional 41,000 disabled veterans within Maryland would be eligible to apply. They would still be required to complete the qualifying steps but at least they would now have the opportunity to consider this option.

One point I do want to clarify is that lowering the qualifying threshold from 100% to 50% will not result in an increase cost for administrating departments and agencies as H.B. 250 keeps the free registration at the 100% disabled threshold. The shift in range only provides the opportunity for more disabled veterans to apply for

the unique license plate. Those between the 50%-99% range will still be required to pay the current fees already administered.

In closing, I would like to note that Governor Moore has clearly prioritized supporting veterans and, as a veteran myself, so have I. That is why I am asking you today to provide a favorable report for H.B. 250 as it will go a long way in providing a small but important recognition for our disabled veteran community.

I would also like to note that I have submitted for the record the unanimous letter of support from the Maryland General Assembly Veterans Caucus in favor of H.B. 250. I am thankful, humbled, and honored to have their support on such an important piece of legislation.

Thank you for your time, and I request a favorable report on H.B. 250.



MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
VETERANS CAUCUS

TO: Chair Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Maryland Veterans Caucus, House Membership

DATE: January 31, 2023

RE: **HB0250 – Vehicle Laws – Disabled Veteran Registration Plates – Issuance**

The Maryland Veterans Caucus, House Membership respectfully requests a favorable report on **HB0250 – Vehicle Laws – Disabled Veteran Registration Plates – Issuance**

This bill was sponsored by **Delegate Mike Griffith** for the purpose of authorizing the Motor Vehicle Administration to issue disabled veteran registration plates to certain disabled veterans.

The Veterans Caucus mission it to study, develop, and promote legislation designed to improve the quality of life for veterans in the State of Maryland in the areas of employment, education, economics, training, and health. And to assist the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs in achieving its mission and goals, on behalf of the veterans in the State.

The Veterans Caucus Legislative Review Board offers and recommends support and a favorable report of HB 0250.

Thank you,

Mike Rogers

Delegate Mike Rogers
Acting Chair, Veterans Caucus

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To study, develop, and promote legislation designed to improve the quality of life for veterans in the State of Maryland in the areas of benefits, employment, education, economics, training, and health, and to assist the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs in achieving its mission and goals, on behalf of all veterans in the State.