

**SB0048\_SenLam\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Clarence Lam

Position: FAV

CLARENCE K. LAM, M.D., M.P.H.  
*Legislative District 12*  
Ann Arundel and Howard Counties

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Finance Committee

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Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness

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*Senate Chair*

Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee

Joint Committee on Fair Practices and  
State Personnel Oversight

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Howard County Senate Delegation

*Chair*

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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Support: SB0048, Disaster Service and Uniformed Services Leave Modernization Act of 2023**

**What SB48 Accomplishes:**

- Enables Uniformed Service personnel to access paid leave that only members of the armed services are currently able to use.
- The definition of Uniformed Service comes from [38 U.S.C § 4303\(16\)](#) and [20 CFR § 1002.5\(f\)](#).
- Extends paid disaster service leave to Civil Air Patrol, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, and volunteer EMS, fire departments, and rescue companies.
- Defines “Emergency Manager”
- Allows an employee’s appointing authority to increase the number of paid disaster service leave days that an employee can take

**Why SB48 is Necessary:**

- Maryland law currently does not allow members of the Uniformed Services (US Public Health Service, National Disaster Medical System, National Urban Search and Rescue Response System, etc.) to take paid leave for their duties. Instead, they must either take unpaid leave or personal leave.
- Federal law does provide leave for Uniformed Services, leaving Maryland out of step with federal policy.
- Paid Disaster Service Leave is only available to participants in the Red Cross, excluding many other important community responders.

**SB0048.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jonathan Dayton

Position: FAV



***Allegany Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire Rescue Association***  
***P.O. Box 935 Frostburg, MD 21532***  
***agcvfra.net***

Senate Finance Committee  
Chair Senator Melony Griffith  
January 31, 2023

Dear Committee,

The Allegany Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire Rescue Association is writing you today in full **support** of SB0048: Disaster Service and Uniformed Services Leave Modernization Act of 2023. This proposed new legislation takes the existing five days of annual Disaster Service Leave offered to State employees for Red Cross disaster volunteerism and expands the availability of that leave to other NGOs, including **volunteer fire and EMS departments**. In effect, State employees who are volunteers of Fire/EMS organizations are eligible for up to 5 days of paid leave per year for disaster leave in conjunction with service to local fire/EMS departments. This can be impactful during times of extreme stress on the emergency response system - freeing up additional personnel to surge to support local operations. Fire and EMS departments across the state, including those in Allegany and Garrett Counties, are in dire need of volunteers. This legislation could positively impact operations during times of need.

As this proposed legislation continues through the committee, we offer our full support and will provide additional testimony if the occasion arises.

Sincerely,  
Austin Christner, President  
Jonathan Dayton, MS, NREMT, CNE, Vice President, Public Information Officer, and Legislative Committee Chairperson

The mission of the Allegany and Garrett Counties Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is to serve, promote, advocate and represent the interests of the volunteer fire, rescue, and emergency medical services in Allegany and Garrett Counties.

# **MACo Affiliate\_ Support with Amendments of SB48\_Ja**

Uploaded by: Preeti Emrick

Position: FWA



**MARYLAND**  
*Association of*  
**COUNTIES**

**COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGERS AFFILIATE**

**LETTER IN SUPPORT OF SB 48 WITH AMENDMENTS**

**DISASTER SERVICE AND UNIFORMED SERVICES LEAVE MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2023**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**JANUARY 31, 2023**

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Emergency Managers Affiliate **SUPPORTS SB 48 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill adds certain State employees to provisions of law authorizing disaster service leave with pay, including emergency managers, first responders, and Incident Management Teams (IMTs). Additionally, SB 48 would authorize certain appointing authorities to waive certain requirements for disaster service leave and to increase the number of days of disaster service leave if “in the best interest of the State.” As it is proposed, SB 48 will only apply to State employees, and will not impact local employees or the private sector.

The bill seeks to accomplish three primary objectives:

The first objective is to expand the availability of disaster service leave to include organizations beyond the Red Cross, including Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs), Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COADs), Community Emergency Response Team (CERTs), and local volunteer fire/EMS organizations, among others. Current Maryland law only permits five (5) days of paid disaster service leave for service within the Red Cross for specific disaster operations. Expansion of paid disaster service leave would be incredibly beneficial to county and local jurisdictions that rely on surges of volunteer support during disaster preparedness, response, and recovery operations.

The second objective is to expand the definition of Federal service leave beyond the traditional Armed Services to include the entire "Federal Uniformed Services," including the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps), the National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System (the System), and the new Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Reserve Corps.

The third objective of SB 48 is to establish the definition of an "Emergency Manager." This change is administrative in nature with no operational or legal ramifications. This change would allow for easier inclusion of Emergency Management (EM) professionals in future bills.

MACo Emergency Managers Affiliate has identified the need for two amendments. The first amendment is to correct the current language in the bill as it relates to emergency managers. The current language of "Local Emergency Manager" would be changed to "Emergency Manager." The second amendment would list out each individual Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) rather than placing them subordinate to Maryland VOAD as proposed in the current draft of the bill.

This bill seeks to align Maryland law with current Federal law on these matters. Accordingly, MACo Emergency Managers Affiliate urges the Committee to give SB 48 a report of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS.**