



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 24, 2023

Chair Joseline Pena-Melnyk
House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland

HB 726 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Autism Waiver - Military Families - **Request for Favorable Report**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee:

As the Maryland Military Coalition’s Communication Director, I am requesting your **favorable report** on HB 726. For the record, my name is CAPTAIN Lynn Nash. I am a retired nurse, who completed over 30 years of active-duty service in both the Army and the U.S. Public Health Service. I am well acquainted with the issue. As an Army Community Health Nurse, I case managed the care of family members enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program, a program designed to cover the complicated care of conditions such as Autism.

This bill allows a child on the registry for Autism Waiver to remain on the registry when the child’s family relocates out of state. The number of military bases that have significant numbers of Exceptional Family Members are generally restricted to the Services’ large, medical centers, which offer a wide range of specialty care services. There are less than a dozen medical centers, strategically located across the Continental United States and Germany. As a result, families often relocate around these “hubs” of care, often returning back to be reassigned at a base a number of times during the service member’s careers. These medical centers, in addition to specialty care services, have case managers who ensure that both medical care and student services, such as Individual Educational Plans, are individualized to meet the need of the child. When the family returns to Maryland, the child’s eligibility remains, allowing services to be re-initiated in a timely manner without the burden of additional paperwork.

The reinstatement of service is important as services include service coordination, respite care, in-home supports, behavioral supports, parent training, home modification and other services based on the need of the child.

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HB 726 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Autism Waiver - Military Families - **FAVORABLE**
February 24, 2023

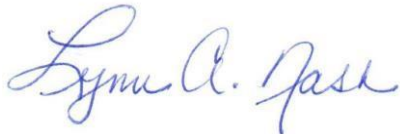
Military family members move frequently, often as much as every two years. Children with autism require extremely stable, consistent environments to function at their best. They cannot wait for critical services, which as ARC has pointed out, the average wait is nine years. Our military families deserve better.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a **voluntary**, non-partisan **organization representing 19 veteran service organizations**, who, in turn, serve over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men, women and their families.

The Coalition ***strongly supports*** Senate Bill HB 726 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Autism Waiver - and asks for your ***favorable report***.

Thank you to Delegate Feldman for sponsoring this important legislation.

Respectfully,

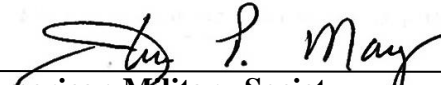
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

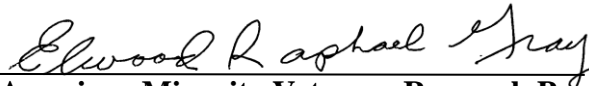
Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN
CAPT (R), U.S. Public Health Service
Communications Director

MMC Member Organizations Signature Page follows


Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition


Air Force Sergeants Association


American Military Society



American Minority Veterans Research Project

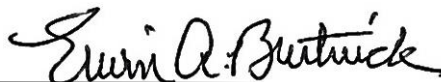

Association of the United States Navy



Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service

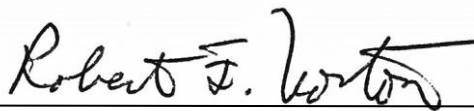

Disabled American Veterans

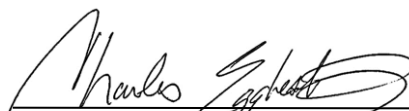

Distinguished Flying Cross Association



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