



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB32
Property Tax – Exemption for Dwellings of Disabled Veterans – Application

Ways and Means Committee
March 21, 2023

Chair Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Wilkins and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB32, Property Tax – Exemption for Dwellings of Disabled Veterans – Application Income. The purpose of this bill is to alter the application requirements for a residential property tax exemption for a dwelling house owned by a disabled veteran or a surviving spouse of a disabled veteran.

Currently under state law a disabled veteran or surviving spouse in Maryland may receive a full property tax exemption on their primary residence. To qualify, a disabled veteran or their surviving spouse must provide the veteran's discharge certificate (DD214) and a certification of the disabled veteran's disability from the US Department of Veterans Affairs. This legislation merely expands the type of qualified documentation allowed under the application process. In lieu of a certification of disability it expands the eligibility paperwork to include a rating decision.

This small change does not expand who is eligible for the existing property tax credit, but merely streamlines the application process. Often, securing the proper documentation can be burdensome on the veteran or surviving spouse. Allowing for the submission of the rating as an alternative to the certification will reduce that burden and assist already vulnerable service members and their families.

As this committee is aware, I am a U.S. Army Veteran who had the honor of serving our country in the Vietnam War. Like many of my comrades, I too have been afflicted by some of the hazards of war. Agent Orange is a defoliant that was used to remove leaves from trees and plants. This herbicide was heavily sprayed for tactical use from 1961 to 1971. It subjected several troops to numerous medical complications, including cancer.

I commend the State in their current statutes that recognize and support our veterans. But those benefits are only advantageous if the process to secure them is reasonable. Let's continue our support of those members and their families but making the process to secure those benefits easier and attainable. This measure's intent is to accomplish that goal.

For these reasons, I am requesting a favorable report.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "With kindest regards,".

Benjamin Brooks