



# MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

*Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy*

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Ben Barnes  
Appropriations Committee  
House Office Building, Room 121  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: **Request for FAVORABLE Report – SB 368 – State Retirement and Pension System – Military Service Credit - Eligibility**

Dear Chair Barnes and distinguished members of the House Appropriations Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) and as its Communication Director (and as a U.S. Public Health Service retired officer), I write to recommend a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on SB 368 **State Retirement and Pension System – Military Service Credit – Eligibility**. This bill expands the definition of “military service” as it relates to service credit in the State Retirement and Pension System (SRPS) to include service after May 7, 1975, with:

1. the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service;
2. the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA);
3. or, the Coast and Geodetic Survey. Any member with qualifying service may claim service credit for service in those branches that precedes or interrupts membership in SRPS, as specified in current law.

This expansion conforms with 10 U.S. Code § 101 – Definitions, which classifies both USPHS and NOAA officers as members of the “Uniformed Services”; and § 38 U.S. Code, 21 (21) which considers members of USPHS and NOAA” as Active Duty. Further this bill conforms to the term of “veteran” in Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 1, Section 28 “Rules of Interpretation”, which became effective on July 1, 1984. Article 1 states:

WITH RESPECT TO **ANY STATE PROGRAM OF BENEFITS**, RIGHTS, OR PRIVILEGES APPLICABLE TO A **VETERAN** UNDER THIS CODE, THE TERM “**VETERAN**” INCLUDES MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSIONED CORPS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AND THE COMMISSIONED CORPS OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (OR ITS PREDECESSOR, THE COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY) IF ELIGIBLE UNDER § 101, TITLE 38 OF THE U.S. CODE.

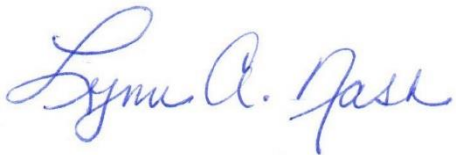
**SB 368 –SRPS– Military Service Credit – Eligibility – FAVORABLE**

The Maryland Military Coalition *strongly supports SB 368 a*– State Retirement and Pension System – Military Service Credit – Eligibility and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report from the Appropriations Committee. Passage of this bill has the potential to attract more retirees from USPHS and NOAA to your 10,000 state government vacancies, it enhances the Moore Administration’s Year of the Military Families and is in keeping with the Governor’s mantra: **“Leave No One Behind”**.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a non-partisan organization of 21 Veteran organizations representing over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men and women and their families -- almost half of the 355,000 veterans in the State.

We want to thank Senator Waldstreicher and Senator Gile for sponsoring this important legislation and their continued strong support of the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

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

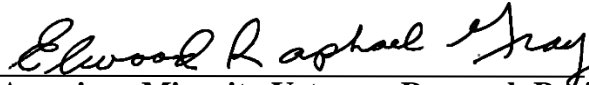
Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN  
CAPTAIN (Ret)., U.S. Public Health Service  
Communications Director

Members of the Maryland Military Coalition Follow

## Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition

  
Air Force Sergeants Association

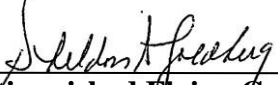
  
American Military Society

  
American Minority Veterans Research Project

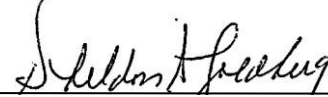
  
Association of the United States Navy


  
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

  
Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

  
Military Officers Association of America

  
Military Order of the Purple Heart

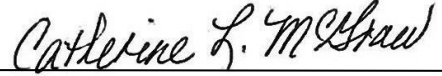
  
Montford Point Marines of America

  
National Association for Black Veterans

  
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

  
NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

  
Reserve Organization of America

  
Society of Military Widows

  
National Active and Retired Federal Employees  
Veterans Affairs Directorate, NARFE MD

  
Veterans of Foreign Wars