

SB 368 State Retirement and Pension System-Military Service Credit-Eligibility
Oral Testimony

Good afternoon. My name is Glenda Grogan and I am testifying today as a former Lt Commander of the Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service (PHS). Early in my career, I accepted a position as an occupational therapist at the National Institutes of Health with the Commissioned Corps. Commissioned Corps officers wear a uniform, carry a military ID, and receive the same benefits as active duty military.

In addition to conducting research and giving patient care, PHS officers are subject at any time to deployment to all parts of the nation and the world to address public health crises such as 9/11, the Ebola epidemic, Hurricane Katrina, and the Covid 19 pandemic. Commissioned Corps officers serve where they are needed most, addressing complex medical issues affecting the health of the American people. I am proud to have been a member of the Commissioned Corps.

So, in my current position as an occupational therapist with Montgomery County Public Schools, when I saw that there was a military service benefit available to Maryland educators, I applied. However, my application was denied because my service with the Commissioned Corps did not occur during The Vietnam War, The Korean War, or World War II.

So that's why I'm here—to testify in support of this bill to make service in the Commissioned Corps at any time eligible for the military service benefit. When you take the oath to serve in the Commissioned Corps, you don't know what public health crisis you may face or where you may be deployed, but you know that this is part of your duty of service. I believe this is true service, fully deserving of receiving this valuable and meaningful benefit. I urge you to support this bill. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Glenda Grogan, MS, OTR/L
MCPS Occupational Therapist