



**Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of the Secretary**

**WES MOORE  
GOVERNOR**

**ARUNA MILLER  
LT. GOVERNOR**

**ANTHONY C. WOODS  
SECRETARY**

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 597 - Human Services - Individuals with Disabilities and Service-Disabled Veterans Boating Fund  
Position: Favorable with Amendments

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (“MDVA”) supports Senate Bill 597 - Human Services - Individuals with Disabilities and Service-Disabled Veterans Boating Fund.

The MDVA supports the establishment of this fund to provide sailing, boating, kayaking, canoeing, and paddleboarding opportunities for individuals with disabilities and service-disabled veterans.

We agree with the Department of Disabilities and suggest the following amendments to expand the program to include: (1) Nonprofits offering surfing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to be eligible for the grant funding, (2) Remove the mention of “Chesapeake Bay or its tributaries.”

These amendments would allow the fund to promote adapted water activities more equitably across the state and beyond the Chesapeake Bay region. I respectfully ask the Committee for a favorable report with amendments to SB 597.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Woods". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anthony C. Woods  
Secretary