

**SB0533\_DNR\_SUP\_EEE\_2-13-24.pdf**

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Position: FAV



Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor  
Josh Kurtz, Secretary  
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

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February 13, 2024

**BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 533 – First Reader**

**SHORT TITLE: Fishing and Hunting Licenses and Trout Stamps - Complimentary Licenses and Stamp Exemption - Veterans Determined to Be Unemployable**

**DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT**

**EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION**

The agency supports Senate Bill 533. Although there is a potential small negative fiscal impact to the agency, by including individuals who are not 100% service connected disabled veterans, but are 100% unemployable due to their service connected disability, it clarifies an often confusing difference between types of service connected disabled veterans applying for the complimentary license. The agency is familiar with the paperwork related to both classifications from the U.S. military and can easily make adjustments in our licensing system to accommodate the change.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The agency does issue complimentary licenses to former prisoners of war, 100% service connected disabled American veterans, certain government individuals such as the President of the United States and state governors. Additionally, the state has free fishing areas

**BILL EXPLANATION**

The bill would make recreational fishing licenses free veterans who are deemed unemployable due to their service related disability.

Contact: Dylan Behler, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services  
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**SB 533 - MDVA LOS.pdf**

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Position: FAV



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

**WES MOORE  
GOVERNOR**

**ARUNA MILLER  
LT. GOVERNOR**

**ANTHONY C. WOODS  
SECRETARY**

February 12, 2024

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

RE: SB 533 - Fishing and Hunting Licenses and Trout Stamps - Complimentary Licenses and Stamp Exemption  
- Veterans Determined to be Unemployable.

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs supports SB 533 - Fishing and Hunting Licenses and Trout Stamps - Complimentary Licenses and Stamp Exemption - Veterans Determined to be Unemployable. We were pleased to see SB 533 introduced in this session, and wholeheartedly support allowing unemployable veterans to receive complimentary fishing and hunting licenses.

Studies show that getting outside to engage in outdoor activities, such as fishing and hunting, can be beneficial in treating mental health issues common to veterans, including post-traumatic stress, depression, and anxiety. This type of outdoor therapy will help unemployable veterans reconnect with nature and find peace outside in our beautiful State.

We respectfully request a favorable report on SB 533. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Anthony C. Woods  
Secretary