



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

**WES MOORE
GOVERNOR**

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LT. GOVERNOR**

**ANTHONY C. WOODS
SECRETARY**

March 21, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support with Amendment — Senate Bill 275 — Vehicle Laws - Special Registration Plates - Gold Star and Next of Kin Families

Dear Chairman Korman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (“MDVA”) supports Senate Bill 275 - Vehicle Laws - Special Registration Plates - Gold Star and Next of Kin Families

When we speak of Gold Star families, we are referring to those who have lost a son, daughter, spouse, or close relative in the line of duty. These families bear a profound and heart-wrenching burden, yet they stand resilient, a testament to the strength of the human spirit. The gold star, symbolizing the loss of a family member in service, is a stark reminder of the sacrifices made by these extraordinary families. It is a symbol not only of grief but also of honor and valor. Each gold star represents a life given selflessly for the ideals that define our great nation—freedom, justice, and liberty.

This legislation will go some small way toward honoring and recognizing those lives, and those families who gave the ultimate sacrifice. When a family displays these plates, it improves understanding of their experience and serves as a reminder to the larger community of their sacrifice.

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs and the Motor Vehicle Administration have agreed on one technical amendment: to strike the requirements for customization on page three, lines 12-13, due to privacy concerns. For these reasons, the MDVA respectfully requests the Committee grant Senate Bill 275 a favorable report with amendment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony C. Woods
Secretary