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Position: FAV



MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

February 6, 2024

Senator Pamela G. Beidle
Chair, Senate Committee on Finance
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401 – 1991

Remarks of
Christopher R. Arnold
Mid-Atlantic Region Liaison
United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office

Support of: SB 214 – AN ACT concerning Maryland Military Installation Council – Membership

Testimony

Madame chair and honorable committee members, the Department of Defense is grateful for the opportunity to support the policies reflected in Senate Bill 214, for the purpose of altering the membership of the Maryland Military Installation Council. For two decades, the Department has enjoyed a close working relationship with the Maryland Department of Commerce's Office of Military and Federal Affairs, and the members of the Council.¹

My name is Christopher Arnold. I am the Mid-Atlantic Region Liaison at the United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

We represent the Department and establish relationships with state leaders across the country who are concerned for troops and their families' welfare by harmonizing state and federal law and regulation on policy problems of national significance. These are identified by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, and the National Guard Bureau as areas where states can play a crucial role.

The policies reflected in Maryland Senate Bill 214 uniquely address the needs and challenges faced specifically by military families, and compliment several other legislative initiatives proposed as part of making 2024 the year for military families in Maryland, including expanding the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs to the Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families, and creating a Commission on Veterans and Military Families.²

Maryland was the first state to create a legislative authorization for a coordinating body to strengthening collaboration and communication between the state and military installations, the

¹ https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/Exec/DC/EC11-207_2021.pdf

² <https://governor.maryland.gov/news/press/pages/governor-moore-announces-first-items-in-2024-legislative-agenda-to-support-and-empower-maryland-military-families.aspx>

Maryland Military Installation Council, ultimately benefitting service members, families, and local communities.³ This approach has been emulated by other states.⁴

The Maryland Military Installation Council facilitates direct communication and resource sharing between state agencies, military installations, and community organizations, leading to more efficient problem-solving and better-coordinated support services for military families.⁵ The Council's mandate to foster relationships between installations, state agencies and localities has become increasingly important as defense priorities evolve.⁶

Senator William Smith and Delegate Carl Jackson are legislative representatives to the Maryland Military Installation Council. The Council is supported by several defense alliances and receives quarterly updates from the Defense-State Liaison Office; the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation; the Adjutant General of Maryland; the commanding officers of Naval Air Station Pax River, Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Naval Support Activity Annapolis, Naval Surface Warfare Center Carderock, and Naval Support Activity South Potomac; the garrison commanders at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Fort Detrick, and Fort Meade; and the installation commander of Joint Base Andrews.

Senate Bill 214 directly addresses the Department of Defense's state policy priority of integrating military family perspectives into state governance structures, to ensure that military families have a voice in decisions that affect their lives.⁷ This involvement ensures that state policies and initiatives are well-rounded, considerate of military family needs, and effective in enhancing the quality of life for these communities.⁸

Including the Commissioner of the Education on the Council fosters collaboration on dependent education issues impacting military children, such as school enrollment, special education, implementation of the Military Interstate Children's Compact, and child care access, alleviating burdens on families and promoting smoother transitions between states.⁹

Adding a military spouse member to the Council brings the unique perspective and needs of military families directly to the table, ensuring their voices are heard and informing policy decisions that impact their daily lives.¹⁰

³ <https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/26excom/html/23military.html>

⁴ <https://www.denix.osd.mil/sri/tools/sismrs/smc/>

⁵ <https://commerce.maryland.gov/commerce/SiteAssets/boards-and-commissions/military-installation-council/MMIC%20Meeting%20Minutes%20-%209-12-2022%20%28FINAL%209-20-22%29.pdf>

⁶ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. "Strengthening the military family readiness system for a changing American society." (2019). <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/25380/chapter/4>

⁷ <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/StatePolicy/pdfs/2024/discussionpoints-militarycommunityrepresentationstateboardsandcouncils.pdf>

⁸ On July 20, 2023, Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks said "When we take care of our people—our service members and their families—they can focus on their mission to defend the nation. Taking care of our people's basic needs and improving the quality of life of our service members have a direct impact on military readiness."

⁹ <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/StatePolicy/pdfs/2024/bestpractices-militarycommunityrepresentationstateboardsandcouncils.pdf>

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Maryland is home to 77,000 service members and their families.¹¹ Without direct representation on state boards and councils, youth and spouse priorities risk being deprioritized. Expanding the purview and composition of the council will broaden its understanding of the diverse challenges and opportunities faced by military installations and their surrounding communities, empowering the Council to advocate more effectively for policies that support both military and civilian interests.¹²

On behalf of the Department of Defense, we are extraordinarily grateful to Governor Moore for introducing this important legislation, to the members of the Maryland Military Installation Council for our decades-long alignment, and to the members of the Senate Finance Committee for your thoughtful consideration of the policies reflected in this bill.

The Department of Defense looks forward to enjoying future partnership with the Maryland Military Installation Council in its expanded role and scope, as well as with the Maryland General Assembly, as we pursue our shared mission to succeed through teamwork in support of our service members and their families.

Yours etc.,

CHRISTOPHER R. ARNOLD
Mid-Atlantic Region Liaison
Defense-State Liaison Office

¹¹ Defense Manpower Data Center, December 31, 2022.

¹² <https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/priorities/military-community-representation-on-state-boards-and-councils>

Maryland Military Coalition SB0214 Written Testimo

Uploaded by: DAVID Dragics

Position: FAV



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 5, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: **Request for FAVORABLE Report** – SB0214 – Maryland Military Installation Council -- Membership

Dear Chairperson Beidle and distinguished members of the Finance Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) and as its Legislative Director, I write to recommend a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on **SB0214 – Maryland Military Installation Council – Membership**, at the request of the Maryland Department of Commerce. This legislation would primarily expand the current statutory membership of the Maryland Military Installation Council (MMIC) and, in doing so, require the addition of at least one spouse of a service member.

The MMC strongly supports the expansion of the MMIC through the addition of representatives from the Maryland Department of Labor and the State Superintendent of Schools and the requirement of adding at least one military spouse. These additions will bring more direct representation to the MMIC of the views and issues of military families, who have relocated to installations in Maryland as a result of official orders, regarding employment of spouses and the education of their children.

The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports** SB0214 and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report from the Finance Committee. This bill builds on the Moore Administration's Year of the Military Families, adding to the effectiveness of the MMIC's mission to support the military installations in Maryland and maximize the economic benefits to local communities.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of 21 prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups, representing over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers, and survivors.

Subject: **Request for FAVORABLE Report** – SB0214 – Maryland Military Installation Council –
Membership

We want to thank the Maryland Department of Commerce for requesting this legislation and its continued strong support of the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Dragics". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'D' at the beginning.

David L. Dragics
COL USA (Ret)
Legislative Director

Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition

James P. Monahan
Air Force Sergeants Association

John P. May
American Military Society

Elwood Raphael Gray
American Minority Veterans Research Project

W. W. Allen
Association of the United States Navy

Lynn A. Dask
Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service

Wilbert B. Fisher
Disabled American Veterans

Seldon H. Freedberg
Distinguished Flying Cross Association

Phyllis J. Collins
Fleet Reserve Association

Seldon H. Freedberg
Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Steve L. Brooker
Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association

Emmett R. Pickett
Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Robert F. Winton
Military Officers Association of America

Charles E. Galt
Military Order of the Purple Heart

E. J. ...
Montford Point Marines of America

M. L. Meese
National Association for Black Veterans

Michael P. Hays
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

Christian Andreason
NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

John S. ...
Reserve Organization of America

Catherine L. McGraw
Society of Military Widows

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

M. Blackwell
Veterans of Foreign Wars

SB 214_Commerce_MMIC Membership_Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Kevin Anderson

Position: FAV



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Kevin A. Anderson | Secretary of Commerce
Signe Pringle | Deputy Secretary of Commerce

DATE: February 6, 2024
BILL NO: Senate Bill 214
BILL TITLE: Maryland Military Installation Council - Membership
COMMITTEE: Finance
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) supports Senate Bill 214 – Maryland Military Installation Council – Membership.

Bill Summary:

Senate Bill 214 alters the membership of the Maryland Military Installation Council (MMIC) by adding the Secretary of Labor or their designee, the State Superintendent of Schools or their designee, and a spouse of a service member to be appointed by the Governor. The bill also updates the names of two organizations already serving on the MMIC.

Background:

The Maryland Military Installation Council originated as the Maryland Military Installation Strategic Planning Council established by the General Assembly in August 2003 (Chapter 335, Acts of 2003). Effective June 1, 2006, the Council was restructured as the Maryland Military Installation Council (Chapter 634, Acts of 2006). In 2010, the state legislature again amended the charter to repeal the December 31, 2011 termination date for the MMIC, increase membership of the council to 24 by including the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard, and establish four-year, staggered terms for appointed members. The MMIC is staffed by Commerce and the Secretary of Commerce serves as the Chair.

Rationale:

The MMIC is a public forum bringing together those from behind the installation fence to the community to share best practices, provide Department of Defense (DoD) insights on budget and programmatic impacts to the military missions in Maryland and to discuss installation-specific challenges. The MMIC identifies the public infrastructure, potential impact on local communities, and support needed for State military installation development and expansion. The Council also reviews State policies to support military installations and maximize economic benefits to local communities. Adding these three members to the MMIC will bring additional perspectives to the work of the MMIC relating to workforce, education, and issues important to the families of those serving in Maryland.

The economic impact of Maryland’s military installations in FY 2021 was \$61.4B in payroll and expenditures. With 72% of military families living off-base in our communities, the MMIC often discusses and makes recommendations across a variety of topics across the State. With increased focus on workforce, military family housing, and military childcare and education, altering the membership of the MMIC to include additional state departments as statutory

members will not only better serve the state's military families but will bring increased coordination at the state level to holistically support the defense communities throughout Maryland. Additionally, having a military spouse serving on the MMIC will directly bring the perspective of those impacted by these policies and recommendations.

Commerce respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 214.

SB 214 - Expand MMIC LOS.pdf

Uploaded by: Morgan Murphy

Position: FAV



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

**WES MOORE
GOVERNOR**

**ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR**

**ANTHONY C. WOODS
SECRETARY**

February 5, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 214 - Maryland Military Installation Council - Membership

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs supports SB 214 - Maryland Military Installation Council - Membership.

The MDVA believes it is vital to recognize and acknowledge the integral role that military spouses play in the lives of service members, veterans, and their families. As such, we wholeheartedly support this bill, which adds a spouse of a service member to the membership of the Maryland Military Installation Council.

Military spouses offer a unique perspective and add a necessary dimension to understanding the issues and concerns of military families. Spouses are also best positioned to identify solutions to the myriad of challenges that may arise in the course of their family's service to the nation.

In keeping with the Governor's pledge to make 2024 the Year for Military Families, this bill ensures that a military spouse has a seat at the table to contribute their unique viewpoint on the Council. We respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB 214. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Anthony C. Woods
Secretary

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