



# MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

*Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy*

February 22, 2024

Honorable Josephine Pena-Melnyk  
Chair, Health and Government Operations  
Room 241  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

## **HB 938—State-owned Nursing Homes-Deficiencies, Citations and Fines-Reporting Requirements- Request for Favorable Report**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

On behalf of the Maryland Military Coalition, and as its Communications Director, I am submitting testimony in favor of this bill. HB 938 requires that the Department, in this case the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, provide notification when a contractor that they employ to operate a state nursing home receives a deficiency or adopts a plan of correction. When receiving a deficiency, the Secretary or his designee must notify the Governor, the Finance and Health and Government Operations Committee, and those assembly members that represent the district where the nursing home is located.

Maryland is home to Charlotte Hall, currently the only nursing home that the state operates. During COVID-19, Charlotte Hall residents suffered more than surrounding nursing homes as the home incurred more COVID-related deaths than the national average. When the situation came to light, inspectors suspected that residents had also been abuse. The contractor was fired, a new team was brought in and all residents were evaluated.

Since that time, Charlotte Hall has made steady progress, however, there continues to be some problems, which the [Secretary himself](#) said would take years to rectify. Today, the home has a 1 star out of 5 star quality rating by [Medicare](#). There were 18 complaints in the last 3 years, and the facility had 45 citations in that same period.

Charlotte Hall accepts not only veterans, but also their spouses, as only one of a handful of veteran homes do. The residents represent the most vulnerable of populations, often being economically disadvantage. It is imperative that they be protected. More importantly, any future veterans' homes that will be built need to have the same oversight and protections.

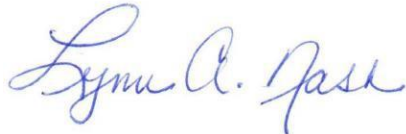
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Our veterans need to be treated with dignity and respect. Events that took place at Charlotte Hall never should have been allowed to happen. Transferring responsibility for notifications to the Secretary is a step in the right direction.

The Maryland Military Coalition, is a voluntary, non-partisan organization representing 21 veteran service organizations who, in turn, serve over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men and women and their families. The Coalition strongly supports HB 938 and asks for your *favorable report*.

Thank you to Delegate Crosby for sponsoring this important legislation.

Respectfully,

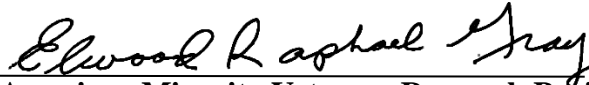
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN  
CAPT (R), U.S. Public Health Service  
Communications Director  
Maryland Military Coalition Member Organizations Follow

## Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition

  
Air Force Sergeants Association

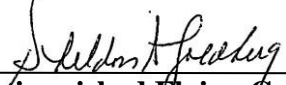
  
American Military Society

  
American Minority Veterans Research Project

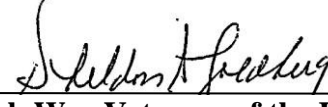
  
Association of the United States Navy


  
Commissioned Officers Association of the  
US Public Health Service

  
Disabled American Veterans

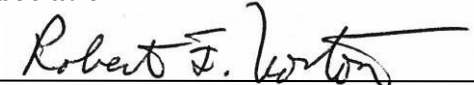
  
Distinguished Flying Cross Association

  
Fleet Reserve Association

  
Jewish War Veterans of the USA

  
Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'  
Association

  
Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

  
Military Officers Association of America


  
Military Order of the Purple Heart

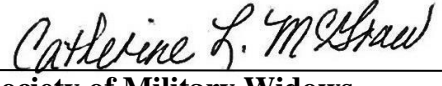
  
Montford Point Marines of America


  
National Association for Black Veterans

  
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

  
NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

  
Reserve Organization of America

  
Society of Military Widows

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

  
Veterans of Foreign Wars