



**Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families
Office of the Secretary**

WES MOORE
GOVERNOR

ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR

ANTHONY C. WOODS
SECRETARY

**Senate Bill 172 - Maryland Veterans Trust - Board of Trustees - Membership
SUPPORT**

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Room 241, Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families (DVMF) is committed to leading veterans and their families through life's transitions, making Maryland the best state for the military-connected communities. DVMF fulfills its mission through five core programs: the Service and Benefits Program, which helps veterans access federal, state, and local earned benefits; Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, offering assisted living and skilled nursing care; the Cemetery and Memorial Program, providing dignified resting places and maintaining memorials honoring Maryland's veterans; the Communications, Outreach, and Advocacy Program, fostering connection and awareness; and the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, offering financial assistance to veterans and their families in need. These programs reflect Maryland's commitment to honoring and empowering its military-connected community.

The Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families supports SB-172, which seeks to expand the membership of the Maryland Veterans Trust Board of Trustees. The Maryland Veterans Trust plays a critical role in supporting Veterans and their families by providing emergency financial assistance. By adding the Secretary of Disabilities to the Board of Trustees, this bill strengthens the Board's ability to advocate for and address the unique challenges faced by Maryland's disabled Veterans, including access to healthcare, employment opportunities, housing accommodations, and critical supportive services.

Maryland is home to a significant population of Veterans who have service-connected disabilities, and many of these individuals require specialized assistance to maintain a high quality of life. Ensuring that the Maryland Veterans Trust has direct representation from the Department of Disabilities will enhance interagency coordination and expand access to key programs that benefit our state's military-connected community. This inclusion aligns with Maryland's commitment to a whole-of-government approach to serving Veterans, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Thank you for your attention to this important proposal and I ask the committee for a favorable report.

THE WINELAND BUILDING, FOURTH FLOOR
16 FRANCIS STREET, ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TOLL FREE: 866-793-1577 • ANNAPOLIS: 410-260-3838 • FAX: 410-216-7928

veterans.maryland.gov
TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Woods". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and 'W'.

Anthony C. Woods
Secretary