



## MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

*Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy*

February 4, 2025

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

Subject: Request for **FAVORABLE Report** – SB0182 – Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program – Eligibility – Family Members of Veterans

Dear Chair Feldman and distinguished members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC), I write to recommend a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on **SB0182 – Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program – Eligibility – Family Members of Veterans**, sponsored by Senator Bryan Simonaire. This bill would expand the eligibility for this program to include a spouse or dependent of an eligible veteran.

Treatment or care from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or a Department of Defense (DoD) medical facility involves not only the veteran but also the veteran's family, that individual's primary support group that cares the most. This bill does not change the State's policy, it only expands the policy to eligible family members, who should be involved with and will benefit from any treatment from the Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program.

The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports SB0182** and asks for a **FAVORABLE report** from the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, nonpartisan advocacy organization comprised of 22 prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups. It represents over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers and survivors. Visit our website at <https://mdmilcoalition.org/>.

We want to thank Senator Simonaire for sponsoring this legislation and for supporting the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

David L. Dragics  
COL (Ret), U.S. Army  
Legislative Director