



JOINT VETERANS COMMITTEE OF MARYLAND, Inc.
TESTIMONY
HB0448 / SB0275 Modernization of Military Laws Act
20 January 2025

House Hearing: Health and Government Operations TBD

Senate Hearing: Education, Energy and the Environment 23 January 2025 1:00pm

The Maryland Joint Veterans Committee (JVC) **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** HB0448 / SB-275 Modernization of Military Laws Act for the following reasons:

- Agree with the effort to standardize terms across the law

JVC offers the following Amendments:

1. Election Law 1 – 101
 - a. The paragraph numbering system needs to be adjusted. The definition for “ACTIVE DUTY” does not belong under the definition of “Absentee Ballot”
2. Election Law 3-202.1
 - a. Move the definitions of “RESERVE COMPONENT” and “UNIFORMED SERVICES” to section 1-101. Combines definitions at the beginning of the article making it easier to find.
3. Changes proposed General Provisions 1-117, Public Utilities 18-111, State Government 2-104 and 9-957 is supported as proposed if the following change is made to the proposed definition of “VETERAN” under State Government 9-901
 - a. (M) Except as otherwise provided [in this subtitle], “veteran” [means an 21 individual who served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States, other than 22 for training, and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable] **HAS 23 THE MEANING STATED IN 38 U.S.C. § 101 INCLUDES UNIFORMED SERVICES AND RESERVE COMPONENTS**
 - i. The added language is needed because 38 U.S.C. § 101 does not make it clear the federal definition covers all the services listed as UNIFORMED SERVICES.
4. State Government 3-303
 - a. Retain the words United States. Deleting this is unnecessary
5. State Government 9-902 (b) (1)
 - a. Retain the verbiage requiring the Secretary to have an honorable discharge.
 - i. Removing the language means the Secretary could be a veteran with a General, Other than Honorable or a Bad Conduct Discharge. These less than Honorable Discharges means the individual has problems with their service time. Maryland veterans deserve to be represented by someone who served honorably.
6. State Government 9-911 (a) (1) (i)
 - a. Retain the verbiage requiring the veterans’ homes to only accept veterans with honorable discharges

The JVC encourages a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** vote.



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The Joint Veterans Committee of Maryland, Inc. is a community of congressionally chartered veteran organizations in the State of Maryland drawn together by strong bonds of respect and mutual ideas and ideals to promote true patriotism, to pursue by legislation and other activities, to advance the welfare of all veterans, their widows, their orphans, and their dependents. JVC is comprised of the following Maryland Veteran Service Organizations: American Veterans (AMVETS), Marine Corps League (MCL), Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), Catholic War Veterans (CWV), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US (VFW).

POC:

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