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Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal
Service Program Workgroup



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 601
Education – Dependent Children of Service Members –
Advance Enrollment Procedures

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 19, 2025

Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on SB 601 – Education – Dependent Children of Service Members – Advance Enrollment Procedures. This legislation provides much-needed support for the families of our nation’s service members by ensuring that the children of active-duty military personnel have seamless access to public education when their families relocate to Maryland due to military orders.

In 2009, Maryland joined the [Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children](#). Specifically, the compact has provisions to facilitate timely transfers of educational records and the continuation of schooling for children dependents of service members. In 2020, the General Assembly [amended](#) the Compact to ensure that dependent children of service members could apply for enrollment in public schools in the same manner and at the same time as individuals domiciled in the county. This change was made to close a loophole which prevented many military dependent children from participating in competitive enrollment and magnet courses.

However, this change still presented a challenge for many military families. To enroll in the “same manner” as other students, military families had to travel to Maryland because many Maryland school districts do not offer a remote enrollment option. Not only does each county have a unique procedure for enrolling students, sometimes each individual school might have their own unique process for enrollment. This reality poses significant challenges for military families moving to Maryland and undermines the goals of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

SB 601 directly addresses this issue by mandating that local superintendents must establish a remote enrollment registration process to allow for advance enrollment. Then, the enrollment is finalized within ten days of the military family arriving in the state. This bill also includes provisions to support children with disabilities, ensuring they receive uninterrupted special education services.

Given that there are [approximately 933,000 school aged children in military families](#), SB 601 provides a crucial safeguard to protect their rights to a stable and equitable education. Beyond educational stability, SB 601 enhances Maryland's standing as a military-friendly state and aligns with efforts at the federal level to improve military family quality of life.

Already states such as [Virginia](#), [South Carolina](#), [Washington](#), [Ohio](#), and [California](#) have enacted similar laws to allow remote enrollment. This bill will reaffirm Maryland's commitment to the men and women who serve our country and ensure that their children do not face unnecessary barriers in their pursuit of academic success.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB 601.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks".

Benjamin Brooks