

**2025 SB0114 Testimony For 2025-02-13.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alan Lang

Position: FAV

**SB0114 – Favorable**

Honorable Senators

I support authorizing units in the Maryland Department of Labor to:

- establish a certain process to include a notation of veteran status on an occupational license and
- assist in determining eligibility for State and federal benefits.

I believe we should honor veterans by allowing those who choose to do so, request a notation of veteran status be placed on their occupational licenses.

It is a small price to pay to honor their service.

Please enter a favorable report for SB0114.

Alan Lang  
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Legislative District 30B  
February 13, 2025

# **Maryland Military Coalition SB0114 Written Testimo**

Uploaded by: DAVID Dragics

Position: FAV



## MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

*Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy*

February 11, 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** – SB0114 – Maryland Department of Labor – Licenses –  
Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits

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 **SB0114 – Department of Labor – Licenses – Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits**, sponsored by Senator Bryan Simonaire. This bill authorizes units in the Maryland Department of Labor to establish a certain process to include a notation of veteran status on an occupational license and assist in determining eligibility for State and federal benefits. If the veteran agrees to have that notation applied, that individual also agrees to be contacted by appropriate Executive agencies regarding their eligibility for State or federal veteran benefits.

The MMC supports the intent and processes of this bill. It **recognizes veteran status and reduces the burden on individuals to prove their eligibility for State or federal veteran benefits**, saving them personal time and effort to do so. We applaud this step in making it easier for those who have served other than dishonorably.

The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports SB0114** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report from the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan 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 supporting the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

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

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## **Member Organizations of the 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 U.S. Public Health Service

Disabled American Veterans

Fleet Reserve Association of Annapolis

Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A

Maryland Air National Guard Retirees' Association

National Active and Retired Federal Employees, Maryland Veterans

Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Military Officers Association of America

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Military Order of the World Wars

Montford Point Marines of America

National Association of Black Veterans

National Active and Retired Federal Employees, Maryland Veterans

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

Platoon 22

Reserve Organization of America

Society of Military Widows

Veterans of Foreign Wars

## **SB 114**

Uploaded by: David Heredia, Jr.

Position: FAV



**THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
Department of Maryland, Inc.

The War Memorial Building, Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
410-752-1405

February 12, 2025

David Heredia, Jr.  
Commander, Department of Maryland  
The American Legion  
101 N. Gay Street, Suite E  
Baltimore, MD, 21202

The Honorable Bryan W. Simonaire  
Maryland State Senate  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

cc: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members

Subject: Strong Support for Maryland SB 114 – Honoring Veterans Through Professional License Recognition

Dear Senators Simonaire and Jackson,

On behalf of The American Legion Department of Maryland and our over 42,000 members who proudly support the nearly 350,000 veterans and their families across this great state, I write to express our unwavering and enthusiastic support for Senate Bill 114 (SB 114). This legislation, which authorizes the Maryland Department of Labor to establish a process for including a veteran status notation on occupational licenses, is a significant and necessary step in recognizing the service and sacrifices of Maryland's veterans.

For too long, veterans have faced unnecessary barriers when seeking the recognition, resources, and respect they deserve. These men and women have honorably served our nation and continue to contribute to our communities in countless ways—as professionals, entrepreneurs, and leaders. However, many struggle to access the benefits they have earned simply because their veteran status is not readily identifiable.

This bill is not merely about administrative efficiency; it is about honoring those who served and ensuring their sacrifices are acknowledged in meaningful ways. Including a veteran designation on professional licenses will:

1. **Facilitate Access to Benefits** – Veterans should not have to navigate bureaucratic hurdles to verify their service. A simple designation on a professional license provides immediate verification, ensuring that they can quickly connect with the benefits and services they have rightfully earned.
2. **Recognize and Honor Their Sacrifice** – This notation is more than just an administrative detail. It serves as a daily reminder to employers, clients, and colleagues that the individual holding this license has served our nation with honor.
3. **Strengthen Support and Outreach** – Identifying veterans within licensed professions enables Maryland to better understand their unique needs and tailor policies and programs that provide them with essential support and opportunities.

As Commander of The American Legion Department of Maryland, I have spoken with countless veterans who feel frustrated by the complexities of proving their status when seeking assistance or opportunities. SB 114 will eliminate one of these barriers and send a strong message that Maryland values and respects its veterans.

Our organization, along with other veteran service organizations such as the DAV and VFW, works tirelessly to support veterans by providing free assistance through accredited Veteran Service Officers (VSOs). SB 114 will complement these efforts, helping veterans gain access to the resources, recognition, and opportunities they have earned.

This legislation affirms that Maryland is committed to honoring its veterans not just in words, but through tangible action. It is a bold and necessary step in ensuring that those who have given so much to our nation are supported in their civilian careers.

We commend your leadership in sponsoring SB 114, and we urge the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to pass this bill without hesitation. Maryland's veterans have served us—now it's our turn to serve them.

Thank you for your commitment to our veterans. Together, we can make Maryland a state that truly honors and supports those who have served.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Heredia Jr.".

David Heredia, Jr.  
Commander, Department of Maryland  
The American Legion

cc: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members



**SB114\_AARP\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: James Campbell

Position: FAV



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**SB114 Maryland Department of Labor – Licenses – Notation of Veteran Status  
and Eligibility for Benefits**

**FAVORABLE**  
**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**Senate Finance Committee**  
**February 13, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee; and Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Jim Campbell President Emeritus for AARP Maryland and a former Maryland State Delegate. I chair the AARP Maryland Veterans committee and am here to support SB 114 sponsored by Senators Simonaire and Jackson. AARP has four areas of focus serving members of the military: caregiving, fighting fraud, helping with career and employment opportunities through the Veterans and Military Spouse Job Center, and access to benefits.

**What does the bill do?**

This bill authorizes units in the Maryland Department of Labor to include a notation of veteran status on a license or certificate issued by the Department.

**How will it help veterans?**

This is part of a package of bills by the sponsors designed to recognize military service by state employees and to help ensure they have awareness of access to earned benefits.

In recognizing the sacrifices, they made for our country, AARP believes we must ensure that our veterans have the most efficient access to the benefits they are entitled to receive. SB 114 will help achieve that goal and we urge a favorable report. For questions or additional information, please contact Tammy Bresnahan, Senior Director of Advocacy at [tbresnahan@aarp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@aarp.org) or by calling 410-302-8451.



**SB 114 Senator Simonaire\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kara Contino

Position: FAV

BRYAN W. SIMONAIRE  
Legislative District 31  
Anne Arundel County

Education, Energy, and the  
Environment Committee

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and  
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



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## *The Senate of Maryland* ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

### **SB 114 - Maryland Department of Labor - Licenses - Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits**

I am Senator Bryan Simonaire presenting SB 114.

I worked with the **Department of Labor** and **the military community** on this consensus legislation. It basically allows a veteran to put a 'Veteran notation' on their professional Labor license.

First, let me say this is enabling legislation for all its departmental licensing boards, and setups the framework if the Department implements it on one or more of its boards.

I have **worked with the Department** and **flexibility is key** to success and this bill provides that flexibility.

This bill does two main things:

- 1) Enables one or more of the Department's licensing boards to issue a professional license or certificate with the **"Veteran" notation** placed on it, and
- 2) If enabled, it establishes an outreach to the veteran if they want the Veteran notation and the applicant consents to being contacted by appropriate Executive Branch agencies regarding the applicant's eligibility for State or federal veterans' benefits.

This may sound familiar as this is what is done for the **MVA driver licenses**. Driver license applicants can have a veteran's notation placed on their driver license and be contacted by the Department of Veterans and Military Families regarding available veteran benefits.

The only difference is that this **legislation is enabling**.

The advantage to this approach is the **Department knows** which boards this would work on best and could even pilot it on a few before rolling it out on more or all their boards.

While the **MVA program has been hugely popular**, Maryland has a long way to go to reach our veterans as **less than 50%** of our veteran population is taking advantage the MVA program.

That's why it is imperative we **use as many methods** as possible to reach out to our veterans. This legislation provides one more tool to reach out to veterans while also providing additional benefits to the veteran community.

Additionally, in Maryland, we are looking to do everything we can to help reduce veteran suicide. One of the key factors is avoiding **isolation**.

This legislation provides multiple benefits, including reducing isolation:

1. This will help with **networking and reducing isolation** as more people including other veterans will see these licensees are veterans and hopefully reach out more to them.
  - a. One of the many factors of **veterans' suicide is isolation** especially as it pertains to a veterans' own service and experiences. This will allow for public awareness of veterans through thanking them for their service, other veterans seeing it and talking with them and re-enforcing they are **not alone**.
2. It provides **another tool to reach out** to our veteran population with their consent through using their contact information to share eligible benefits with them,
3. It is another avenue for the public to **show appreciation** for their service, and
4. Lastly, it also provides **potential financial benefits** to our veteran as many customers are more likely to hire a veteran, repeat as a customer or just give a bigger tip for their service, where applicable.

If you think about it, **you can't beat this is a low-cost investment** with all its potential benefits.

For all these reasons, I ask for your favorable consideration.

# **DVMF SB 114 Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Morgan Murphy

Position: FAV



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

**WES MOORE  
GOVERNOR**

**ARUNA MILLER  
LT. GOVERNOR**

**ANTHONY C. WOODS  
SECRETARY**

**Senate Bill 114- Maryland Department of Labor - Licenses - Notation of Veteran Status and  
Eligibility for Benefits  
SUPPORT**

February 10, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller 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 Department of Veterans and Military Families supports Senate Bill 114- Maryland Department of Labor - Licenses - Notation of Veteran Status and Eligibility for Benefits; which authorizes the Maryland Department of Labor to include a notation of veteran status on occupational and professional licenses and assist in determining eligibility for state and federal veterans' benefits. This legislation represents a meaningful step toward improving access to essential services and benefits for Maryland's veteran community.

Maryland is home to more than 360,000 veterans, many of whom transition into civilian careers requiring professional licensing and certification. Senate Bill 114 ensures that these veterans receive recognition of their service and a streamlined process to access the benefits they have earned. By allowing veterans to voluntarily indicate their status on occupational licenses and granting them the option to receive direct outreach from executive agencies, this bill facilitates critical connections between veterans and available state and federal resources.

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

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[veterans.maryland.gov](http://veterans.maryland.gov)  
TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

Key benefits of Senate Bill 114 include:

1. **Enhanced Access to Benefits:** Veterans often face challenges in navigating the complex system of state and federal benefits. By integrating veteran status into occupational licenses, agencies can proactively provide guidance and support tailored to their needs.
2. **Simplified Employment Transition:** Many veterans possess skills and expertise that align with licensed professions. Recognizing their status on licenses can help facilitate employment pathways and reinforce the state's commitment to hiring and supporting veterans.
3. **Increased Outreach and Awareness:** The bill allows veterans to consent to being contacted by relevant agencies, ensuring they receive timely and accurate information about programs designed to support their transition to civilian life.
4. **Recognition of Military Service:** Officially acknowledging veteran status on professional licenses demonstrates Maryland's appreciation for the contributions and sacrifices of service members and helps them establish credibility in their chosen careers.

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

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