



## MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

*Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy*

March 3, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Request for **FAVORABLE Report** – SB872 – Local Government – Hiring and Promotion Preferences for Veterans and Spouses of Service Members and Veterans (Families Serve Act)

Dear Chair Beidle and members of the Finance Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC), I write to recommend a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on **SB872 – Local Government – Hiring and Promotion Preferences for Veterans and Spouses of Service Members and Veterans (Families Serve Act)**, sponsored by Senator Jennings. This legislation enables counties and municipalities to grant, by local law, a preference in the hiring and promotion of spouses of eligible uniformed services members, eligible veterans, spouses of certain eligible veterans and eligible service members, and surviving spouses of deceased eligible veterans. It essentially duplicates at the local level of government what the Families Serve Act of 2024 did at the state level of government.

The employment of spouses of members of the uniformed services is one of the biggest challenges these individuals continue to face. Last year, during the hearings for the Families Serve Act of 2024, it was pointed out that the estimated unemployment rate for these spouses in Maryland was approximately 11 percent. Creating incentives for the employment of these spouses is important to not only the retention of families in the uniformed services but also to the readiness of the armed forces.

SB872 would enable those local jurisdictions that choose to enact this legislation and authorize hiring and promotion preferences, to compete for qualified individuals to fill key vacancies. Per the Maryland Department of Labor's Census of Employment and Wages,<sup>1</sup> there are over twice as many individuals employed at the local level of government as there are at the state level. Further, the ten counties and jurisdictions

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/lmi/ces/>

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near or in which there are major defense installations<sup>2</sup> account for over 85 percent of those positions. **Passing this bill increases the number of potential employment opportunities for those individuals who are eligible to take advantage of the preferences offered.**

The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports SB872** and asks for a **FAVORABLE report**. As was pointed out last year, the Department of Defense (DoD) is placing greater emphasis on the quality of life to better serve military families and help with recruiting and retention. In addition, quality of life is increasingly factored into basing decisions. The passage of this bill will further improve Maryland's position to successfully sustain and attract new DoD missions.

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 Jennings for sponsoring this legislation and for supporting the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,



Jayson L. Spiegel  
LTC, Army Reserve (Ret.)  
President

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<sup>2</sup> <https://oldcc.gov/defense-spending-state-fiscal-year-2023>, Defense Spending by State Fiscal Year 2023, page 59