

MMC SB872 Favorable 030325.pdf

Uploaded by: Jayson Spiegel

Position: FAV



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,¹ 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

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

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

near or in which there are major defense installations² 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

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

2025 MGA - SB872_FAV_HCGCassilly.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert Cassilly

Position: FAV

ROBERT G. CASSILLY
Harford County Executive



ROBERT S. McCORD
Director of Administration

March 3, 2025

Senator Pamela Beidle, Chair
Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support on SB872 – Local Government – Hiring and Promotion Preferences for Veterans and Spouses of Service Members and Veterans (Families Serve Act)

Dear Chairwoman Beidle and Committee Members,

Harford County is home to Aberdeen Proving Grounds (APG), a major military installation and Harford's number one employer.

Senate Bill 872 will allow Harford County Government to implement a hiring and promotion preference for military veterans and their spouses as well as spouses of active military members. These men, women, and their families have made considerable sacrifices for our Country. This enables local government to show appreciation for our veterans' sacrifices and support our active-duty military families.

I respectfully request that the Finance Committee report favorably on SB872.

Thank you.

Yours truly,


Robert G. Cassilly

SB 872 Counties Mil Preference FULL FINAL 030225 B

Uploaded by: Robert Doyle

Position: FAV



**Statement of the Maryland Federation of
National Active and Retired Federal Employees
Senate Finance Committee Hearing, March 5, 2025
On SB 872 – Local Government – Hiring and Promotion Preferences for
Veterans and Spouses of Service Members and Veterans
(Families Serve Act)**

(Position – FAV)

To: Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Hayes

Members of the Finance Committee.

I am pleased to provide our written statement today on behalf of the State Legislative Committee of the Maryland Federation - National and Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), representing approximately 317,000 federal annuitants and employees in Maryland. For the continuing benefit of the more than 3,100 Veterans who are Maryland NARFE members – and for all Maryland Veterans - we support and ask you for a favorable report on SB 872 – Local Government - Hiring and Promotion Preferences for Veterans and Spouses of Service Members and Veterans (Families Serve Act). We thank Senator J.B. Jennings for introducing this Bill.

This bill authorizes counties and municipalities to grant hiring and promotion preferences to (1) an eligible veteran; (2) the spouse of an eligible veteran who has a service-connected disability; (3) the spouse of an eligible service member; or (4) the surviving spouse of a deceased eligible veteran. Any such preference, if awarded, does not violate any State or local equal employment opportunity law. The bill further

authorizes counties or municipalities that use selection tests to hire or promote employees to award 10 credit points on the test, or their equivalent, to the same individuals. A county or municipality that elects to offer hiring or promotion preferences or credits under the bill must first adopt a local law granting the preferences or credits.

SB 872 is another step in Maryland's commitment to Veterans and their families that Governor Moore began last year. In 2024, the Assembly passed the Families Serve Act to support Maryland's military families by expanding job opportunities for military spouses. The law requires that spouses of members of any branch of the uniformed services receive a 10-point credit to selection tests when applying for state jobs, and authorizes private employers to grant hiring and promotion preferences to spouses of a full-time active-duty member of any branch of the uniformed services.

From recent events, we believe Veterans unemployment will become a crisis. Data recently released from House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D -CT-03) and Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Ranking Member Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL-25), show almost 6,000 Veterans have been fired in this first wave of Federal employee firings. The Congresswomen have stated that "Veterans are an essential part of our federal workforce, bringing their expertise to every single agency. Republicans are turning their back on them, allowing Musk to fire at least 6,000 veterans and leave them with no way to feed their families or keep a roof over their heads. This move should outrage anyone who respects our veterans and servicemembers and believes our promises to them should be upheld. Trump and Musk have launched an unwarranted and unjustified attack on the veterans and military spouses who sacrificed so much for all of us. By upending their lives and careers, these groundless firings are a disgraceful assault on heroes who admirably served our country. It is deeply offensive that this Administration would attempt to balance our budget on the backs of our veterans,"

The federal government is the single largest employer of veterans in this country, making up 30 percent of the nearly 2.3 million civilian federal workforce. The so-called "Department of Government Efficiency" (DOGE) has stated a goal to eliminate 75 percent of the federal workforce meaning to 500,000 veterans could lose their jobs.¹

¹ <https://democrats-appropriations.house.gov/news/press-releases/trump-and-unchecked-billionaire-musk-have-fired-nearly-6000-veterans>

We believe that Maryland state and local agencies would welcome hard working Veterans and their spouses who will need employment because of the Trump Administration policies on Federal workers. Accordingly, we respectfully request a favorable report on SB 872.

Thank you.

Robert M. Doyle, Co-Chair
Maryland Federation – NARFE
State Legislative Committee
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Uploaded by: Senator Jennings

Position: FAV



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AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

28 FEB 25
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BY: Senator Jennings
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 872

(First Reading File Bill)

On page 3, in line 7, strike “**FOR**” and substitute “**IF**”; in the same line, strike “**WHO**” and substitute “**THAT**”; in the same line, after “**CORPORATION**” insert “**CHOUSES TO GRANT A PREFERENCE UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION**”; and strike beginning with “**AUTHORIZED**” in line 9 down through “**SECTION**” in line 10.

SB 872 - MML - FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Bill Jorch

Position: FWA



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 5, 2025

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill: SB 872 - Local Government - Hiring and Promotion Preferences for Veterans and Spouses of Service Members and Veterans (Families Serve Act)

Position: Favorable with Amendment

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) supports Senate Bill 872, with amendment. The bill provides for local governments to implement a hiring preference for military veterans and their spouses.

Municipal governments employ 24,000 people in the State and act as economic drivers of their region; hiring the right people to work in the public sector is critically important and this bill provides another tool for local governments to customize their hiring practices. Should a local government want to prioritize the hiring of military veterans or their spouses, this bill would allow them to do so. While the bill seems to be enabling for the local government employer, MML seeks a clarifying amendment to further solidify this point.

Amendment:

On page 3, in line 7

“(D) FOR AN EMPLOYER ~~WHO~~ THAT IS A COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION THAT CHOOSES TO GRANT A PREFERENCE UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION SHALL ADOPT A LOCAL LAW THAT PROVIDES FOR THE HIRING AND PROMOTION PREFERENCE AUTHORIZED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION BEFORE IMPLEMENTING THE PREFERENCE.”

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests a favorable report with the above amendment on Senate Bill 872. For more information, please contact Bill Jorch, Director, Public Policy and Research at billj@mdmunicipal.org. Thank you in advance for your consideration.