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The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 142 - State Government - Veterans and Military Families Ombudsman - Establishment
FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Army Alliance, I wish to express its support for House Bill 142. The Army Alliance is a nonprofit advocacy organization whose sole mission is to provide support for one of our major military installations in the State – the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG). From its founding in 1917, APG has grown into the central research facility for the United States Army, one of a number of such military installations in our State.

The defense industry is one of the most important elements of our State economy. Anchored by major installations such as APG, the industry provides a large number of professional, highly compensated jobs for those who work in uniform and the substantially higher number of private sector individuals who support them. Within the APG ecosystem, for example, there are approximately 2,000 uniform military personnel supported by over 20,000 civilian support staff. APG and its surrounding defense community comprise the largest employer in Northeastern Maryland.

This legislation is an important expression of support for the community of military veterans in our State. In recent years, the General Assembly has expressly recognized the contribution that veterans make to our state economy and to our citizens. This bill is yet another expression that will honor their service.

For these reasons, we support House Bill 142.

Very truly yours,



Bryson F. Popham