



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

January 21, 2025

The Honorable Joseline Pena-Melnyk
The Honorable Bonnie Cullison
House Health and Government Operations Committee
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Subject: **Request for FAVORABLE Report-HB0196** – Department of Veterans and Military Families – Board and Commission – Membership and Oversight

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee:

The Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) recommends a FAVORABLE report by the Committee on HB0196 – Department of Veterans and Military Families - Board and Commission – Membership and Oversight.

The MMC strongly supports the provision granting the Department of Veterans and Military Families (DVMF) oversight of the War Memorial Building. In particular, we support the provision directing the DVMF to make the War Memorial Building available to patriotic organizations without cost

The War Memorial Building is well-known, easily accessible and prominent landmark which can serve as a focus for celebrations honoring veterans and our country. Providing the War Memorial Building to organizations at no cost maximizes the War Memorial Building's availability and ensures that organizations, regardless of size or budget to celebrate veterans and the United States. As fewer Americans serve in the uniformed services, maximizing the number of events that pay tribute to veterans is a critical part of connecting uniformed services and civilian society.

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The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups, representing over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers, and survivors.

We want to thank Secretary Woods and the Department of Veterans and Military Families for requesting this bill and their unwavering commitment to our veterans and the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jayson Spiegel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jayson" and last name "Spiegel" clearly distinguishable.

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

1 Attachment – Member Organizations of the Maryland Military Coalition

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

Maryland National Association of Retired Federal Employees Veterans Committee

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

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

Platoon 22

Reserve Organization of America

Society of Military Widows

Veterans of Foreign Wars