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**LETTER OF SUPPORT  
HOUSE BILL 699 & SENATE BILL 491**

February 18, 2025

Chair Peña-Melnyk and Chair Feldman:

On behalf of the LGBTQ+ Caucus, we are writing to express our endorsement of **HB699/SB491: General Provisions - Veterans Benefits - Honorable Discharge**. As advocates and stewards of the LGBTQ+ community, we believe this bill will protect, strengthen, and secure LGBTQ+ rights for all LGBTQ+ residents. The benefits and effects of passing the proposed legislation will create a positive and long-lasting change for all of Maryland.

HB699/SB491 corrects the record for Marylanders who were dishonorably or other than honorably discharged under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and makes sure they are honorably discharged and afforded all of the benefits that they are owed. It makes sure LGBTQ+ members of the military are given full recognition and privileges for their service, even if discharged under 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'.

Thank you for considering the bill's positive effects on the LGBTQ+ community. Please reach out to us regarding any additional questions or concerns on the bill. We appreciate your efforts in fostering community and furthering rights for all Marylanders.

Respectfully,

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Delegate Kris Fair  
Chair