

EDITH J. PATTERSON, Ed.D.

Legislative District 28  
Charles County

Ways and Means Committee

Subcommittees

Local Revenues

Chair, Racing and Gaming

Chair, Southern Maryland  
House Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 429  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3247 · 301-858-3247  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3247  
Edith.Patterson@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB0587/SB0515**  
**Education - High School Diploma – Veterans of Armed Conflicts**

Good afternoon, Chair Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Wilkins, and House Ways and Means Committee members. For the record, I am Delegate Edith Patterson, and I am proud to present **HB0587 – Education – High School Diploma – Veterans of Armed Conflicts**.

As you may know, during World War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam Conflict, countless veterans made the selfless decision to leave high school early to serve our country. Their sacrifices safeguarded the freedoms we enjoy today, but for many of these brave individuals, the opportunity to complete their high school education was lost. Current law allows local county boards of education to issue high school diplomas to veterans who left school to serve in one of these conflicts. While this is an important recognition, HB0587 seeks to expand and modernize this policy.

Initially, the intent was to add veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts to the list. However, after consulting with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Education, and other stakeholders, Senator Simonaire and I concluded that it would be more effective to adopt language that applies broadly to veterans of any armed conflict. This ensures that future generations of veterans will also be eligible for this honor, regardless of when or where they served.

By passing HB0587, we are not only providing these veterans with a symbol of their academic achievement but also formally recognizing the invaluable contributions they made to our country. For many veterans, this diploma represents more than a piece of paper—it is a tangible acknowledgment of their sacrifice, resilience, and commitment to service.

I respectfully urge the Committee to vote favorably for HB0587.

Thank you for your consideration,

Edith Patterson  
Charles County