

HB 1611 SENATE FAV FCG OCE LS26.pdf

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Position: FAV



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

HB 1611 – Property Tax - Credit for Dwelling House of Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses - Income Eligibility

DATE: April 2, 2026
COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **HB 1611 – Property Tax - Credit for Dwelling House of Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses - Income Eligibility** a favorable report. This legislation would allow for counties to establish their own income eligibility requirements for a property tax credit for disabled veterans and surviving spouses.

Frederick County is committed to providing all available resources and assistance to our veteran community and supporting our local Veterans Advisory Council. Our veterans have selflessly served our communities and country, and it is our duty as elected officials to advocate for expanded veteran resources. This includes providing available tax credits to our veterans and their surviving families.

HB 1611 would assist Frederick County in supporting our veterans by allowing us to set local income eligibility requirements for the disabled veterans tax credit, rather than following the current State income cap of \$100,000. This will give local government the ability to tailor eligibility requirements to our communities, better meeting their unique needs.

Frederick County is proud to have a significant veteran population, and this legislation would provide us with the ability to show our commitment to them through setting our own income requirements for this tax credit.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1611 and I urge a favorable report.

Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD

HB1611-BT_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Kevin Kinnally

Position: FAV



House Bill 1611

Property Tax - Credit for Dwelling House of Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses - Income Eligibility

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: April 2, 2026

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1611. This bill authorizes local governments to set income eligibility for an existing local-option property tax credit for specified disabled veterans and surviving spouses.

Under current law, counties may offer a property tax credit for certain disabled veterans and, at local option, their surviving spouses. Eligibility for the credit includes a \$100,000 cap on federal adjusted gross income set by state law. This bill removes that cap and allows counties and municipalities to establish income eligibility criteria through local law.

MACo generally supports policies that preserve local control over locally funded tax benefits and allow counties to align tax relief with fiscal capacity and community priorities. Counties need the flexibility to evaluate these programs holistically and determine how local tax policy should reflect those priorities. This bill allows counties to make those decisions locally, rather than operate under a single statewide threshold.

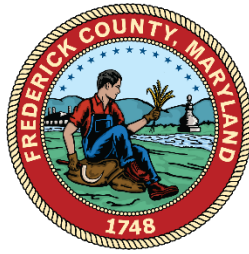
HB 1611 maintains the existing structure of the credit, preserves local authority over whether to offer the benefit, and allows counties to set income eligibility through local law to reflect fiscal capacity and policy priorities.

For these reasons, MACo respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1611.

HB1611_FAVORABLE_Steven McKay - Frederick County C

Uploaded by: Steven McKay

Position: FAV



Frederick County Council Steven J. McKay, District 2

HB1611 – Property Tax – Credit for Dwelling House of Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses – Income Eligibility

DATE: April 2, 2026
COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: Steven J. McKay, Frederick County Council, District 2

I would like to strongly urge the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to give HB1611 a favorable report to enable Baltimore City and all Maryland counties to raise the income eligibility requirements for the Disabled Veterans Property Tax Credit.

As a member of the Frederick County Council, I sponsored this bill which received unanimous support from our Council and our County Executive. I greatly appreciate Delegate Pippy for taking a leadership role and bringing this bill forward for your consideration.

This is not the bill that I initially authored. The original bill would have allowed Baltimore City and Maryland counties to determine what – if any – income limitations should be placed on this property tax credit. The bill was amended in the House to remove the proposed local control of income eligibility, and then significantly increased the income levels in State code. From a blanket \$100,000 income limit, the amended bill allows single filers to qualify with income up to \$150,000, and dual filers up to \$300,000.

I support these amendments.

The current \$100,000 income eligibility limit was first put in State code in 2020. This amount of income no longer means what it did six years ago. In effect, by not adjusting this income limit over the last six years, relatively more and more of our Disabled Veterans have been denied this tax credit as inflation-adjusted income has risen.

Most importantly, however, is that our Disabled Veterans have served this nation, have served us all, and given of themselves so much. We owe them a debt that we can never adequately repay. The Disabled Veterans Property Tax Credit program is only a small token of our esteem and our gratitude for their service and sacrifice. That gratitude shouldn't be hedged by artificial income limitations, but if it must, then those income limitations should keep pace with inflation and should be made higher by this bill.

I hope that you will agree and provide a “Favorable” report on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve McKay". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Steve McKay
Frederick County Council, District 2

Testimony in Favor of HB 1611 - Crossover to Senat

Uploaded by: Megan O'Brien

Position: FWA

Testimony in Favor with Amendments for House Bill 1611: Property Tax – Credit for Dwelling House of Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses - Alterations

Before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1611. My name is Alyssa Sanders, and I am the Director of Advocacy at EveryMind, a nonprofit organization that has served Maryland communities for nearly 70 years by providing prevention, early intervention, and mental health services across the continuum of care, including supporting our veteran community through case management services with our ServingTogether program. I thank Senator Salling for bringing this important piece of legislation back this year.

On behalf of EveryMind, I write to request a favorable report with amendments on House Bill 1611 – Property Tax – Credit for Dwelling House of Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses – Alterations. This bill would replace the single threshold for federal adjusted gross income for a disabled veteran in with thresholds for disabled veterans filing either an individual income tax return or a joint income tax return. The bill would also revise the disability ratings in the same Section for 50% and 25% property tax credits to align with Department of Veterans Administration ratings, which are awarded in increments of 10%.

As currently written, the Code penalizes a married disabled veteran who files a joint income tax return as the federal adjusted gross income for both exceeds \$100,000 in virtually 100% of returns. Including a provision for a disabled veteran filing a joint tax return, as Senate Bill 980 does, is the right step to take for these individuals and is long overdue. These veterans have been, and are, as deserving as those who have been granted this property tax credit since the law was enacted in 2020.

We also recognize that several Maryland counties have individually enacted some version of property tax credits for disabled veterans with ratings less than 100%, including Anne Arundel, Frederick, Hartford, Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties. Additionally on the County front, the counties with the largest numbers of disabled veterans are the counties with the highest Area Median Incomes (AMIs), demonstrating that an amended bill would have a significant impact on the largest number of disabled veterans.

Through our ServingTogether program, EveryMind works closely with veterans, active-duty military members, and their families across the state to provide case management, suicide prevention, and mental health workshops through a military lens. We hear from our clients about the many needs this population faces, and housing is consistently one of the most requested support areas. We recognize the need to help disabled veterans with property tax assistance, especially in light of rising property values.



Our Care Coordination Center recently assisted a post-Vietnam era Air Force Veteran who came to us seeking financial assistance with his property taxes, utilities, and vehicle repairs. As a disabled veteran with a rating less than 100%, he was not able to qualify for property tax exemptions. Thus, the high cost of the property taxes made it hard for him to be able to pay for his other needs, and he lives in Howard County where assistance for these cases is exceptionally difficult to find. Our Care Coordinator was able to connect him to the local Department of Social Services for his tax needs but prioritized helping him find solutions to his other expenses including an application to the Elizabeth Dole Foundation for vehicle repair funds.

While we had to get creative to help this veteran with resources and focus on how we could help him with his other expenses, House Bill 1611 would make it easier to support our veterans' full needs. It would be an important recognition of the sacrifices made by veterans who have become disabled while serving our country. The bill would lessen the financial burden on disabled veterans and increase the likelihood that they can remain in the homes.

Along with the Maryland Military Coalition, EveryMind strongly supports this legislation – with an amendment added to include Area Median Income (AMI) as the income threshold. This requested amendment would create more impact for disabled veterans.

We wish to thank Delegate Pippy for sponsoring this very important legislation and for his continued support of the uniformed services community in Maryland.