

Jacob Livingston Favorable Testimony

Senate Bill 263 | Education - Dependent Children of Active Service Members - Advance Enrollment Procedures

Good afternoon Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of Senate Bill 263. My name is Jacob Livingston. I am a ninth grader at South River High School.

I am a military kid. My dad has served in the U.S. Navy for more than 23 years, and because of his service, my family has moved a lot. I am currently in my sixth school, and I'm only in ninth grade.

Every time we move, school is the hardest part. You're the new kid again. You don't know the teachers, the rules are different, and sometimes you're not even sure what classes you'll be able to take until after school starts. That can be really stressful, especially when you're already leaving friends behind.

One of the hardest parts is the waiting. Waiting for paperwork. Waiting to find out where you'll go to school. Waiting to see if there's space for you. And if you need extra support—like special education services—that waiting can feel even longer.

Senate Bill 263 would make a real difference for kids like me. By allowing military families to enroll their children in school before they arrive in Maryland, it gives us one less thing to worry about during a move. It means we can show up on day one knowing where we belong, what classes we'll be in, and that support will be there when we need it.

Military kids don't choose to move—but we do our best to adapt. This bill helps make sure we don't fall behind just because our parents serve our country.

Maryland has the chance to show that it understands military families and values military children. Supporting this bill tells kids like me that our education matters too.

Thank you for listening, and I respectfully ask for a favorable report on Senate Bill 263.