



Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families
Office of the Secretary

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SECRETARY

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

February 27, 2026

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families (DVMF) is committed to leading veterans and their families through life's transitions, making Maryland the best state for the military-connected communities. We proudly support Senate Bill 263, which establishes advance enrollment procedures for the dependent children of service members relocating to Maryland under military orders.

SB 263 is a critical step in ensuring that Maryland remains a military-friendly state, easing the educational transition for military-connected families who already face unique challenges due to frequent relocations. Twenty-three states have already passed similar legislation, and it is currently before nine other state legislatures.

Military-connected children move an average of six to nine times during their K-12 education, often encountering delays in school enrollment, disrupted coursework, and difficulty accessing specialized programs. SB 263 directly addresses these challenges by:

- **Ensuring Military-Connected Students Can Enroll in Advance:** This bill requires local superintendents to allow military families with dependent K-12 children to enroll in school in advance, providing them with equitable access to school placement, course registration, and charter school lotteries before physically relocating to the state.
- **Preventing Disruptions for Students with Disabilities:** The bill mandates local school systems to coordinate with parents and the sending state's school district to ensure the seamless transfer of students with disabilities, preventing delays in receiving special education services.
- **Facilitating a Remote Registration Process:** By establishing a no-cost, remote enrollment option, this bill removes unnecessary barriers and prevents service members from having to appear in person to complete their child's school registration.

- **Providing Long-Term Educational Stability:** The bill guarantees that military-dependent K-12 students who utilize advance enrollment will be able to remain in their chosen school throughout the school year, ensuring educational consistency despite future relocations.
- **Improving Access to Educational Programs:** Military-connected students will have the same rights as their peers to participate in academic programs, extracurricular activities, and athletic and social programs from the moment they are enrolled.

By passing Senate Bill 263, Maryland will demonstrate its commitment to supporting military families and honoring their sacrifices. The ability to enroll in school without unnecessary delays significantly eases the burden on service members and their families, ensuring their children can transition smoothly into new educational environments without disruption to their academic progress. This bill has no fiscal impact.

Thank you for your attention to this important proposal and I ask the committee for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward C. Rothstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ed Rothstein
Secretary