

Maryland Military Coalition SB0057 Written Testimo

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Position: FAV



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 16, 2026

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

Subject: Request for **FAVORABLE Report** – SB0057 – Primary and Secondary Educators – Licenses and Public Profiles – Notation of Veteran Status

Dear Chair Feldman and distinguished members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition¹ (MMC), I write to request a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on ***SB0057 – Primary and Secondary Educators – Licenses and Public Profiles – Notation of Veteran Status***, sponsored by Senator Bryan Simonaire. This bill would enable the Department of Education to establish a process to include a notation indicating veteran status on a license or public profile upon the request and affirmative consent of the veteran. Upon that request and consent, the individual also agrees to be contacted by appropriate Executive Branch agencies regarding their eligibility for State or federal veteran benefits.

The MMC supports the intent and underlying processes of this bill. It **recognizes veteran status and reduces the burden on individuals to prove their eligibility for State or federal veteran benefits**, thereby improving the State's ability to actively connect veterans with benefits and services for which they may qualify, and saving the veteran personal time and effort to do so. We applaud this step in making it easier for those who have served other than dishonorably.

The Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports SB0057** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report from the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of 21 prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups. It represents over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers and survivors. For further information, visit our website at <https://mdmilcoalition.org/>.

¹ See attached list of member organizations.

Subject: Request for FAVORABLE Report – SB0057 – Primary and Secondary Educators – Licenses and Public Profiles – Notation of Veteran Status

We want to thank Senator Simonaire for sponsoring this legislation and supporting the uniformed services community in Maryland.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Dragics". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "D".

David L. Dragics
COL (Ret), U.S. Army
Legislative Director



Member Organizations of the Maryland Military Coalition

Air Force Sergeants Association

American Military Society

American Minority Veterans Research Project

Association of the United States Navy

Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service

Disabled American Veterans

Fleet Reserve Association of Annapolis

Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A

Maryland Air National Guard Retirees' Association

National Active and Retired Federal Employees, Maryland Veterans

Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Military Officers Association of America

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Military Order of the World Wars

Montford Point Marines of America

National Association of Black Veterans

National Active and Retired Federal Employees, Maryland Veterans

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

Reserve Organization of America

Society of Military Widows

Veterans of Foreign Wars

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Uploaded by: Dr Cashenna A Cross

Position: FAV

FAVORABLE TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 57

Primary and Secondary Educators – Licenses and Public Profiles – Notation of Veteran Status

Position: Favorable

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon. My name is The Honorable, Dr. Cashenna A. Cross, Councilwoman-at-Large for the City of Glenarden and a retired United States Air Force veteran. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 57.

I myself am a Master Instructor trained by the United States Air Force Air Education and Training Command, having trained more than 6,000 United States and international mid-grade officers in secondary-level professional education programs that supported their development toward advanced and master's degree level leadership studies. This experience has given me firsthand understanding of the power of structured instruction, mentorship, and educator leadership in shaping future generations.

Throughout my military career and subsequent public service, I have witnessed how veterans continue their commitment to service long after they remove the uniform. Many transition into education because teaching provides another pathway to serve - guiding young people, strengthening communities, and helping shape the next generation of leaders.

Senate Bill 57 offers a simple but meaningful opportunity to recognize that continued service. Allowing educators to voluntarily include their veteran status on professional licenses and public profiles acknowledges the value of military experience while maintaining personal choice and privacy. It does not create mandates or unnecessary burdens; rather, it provides recognition and connection.

Veterans bring distinctive strengths into the classroom. They understand teamwork, accountability, adaptability, and leadership under pressure. They have operated in diverse environments and often possess a deep appreciation for civic responsibility and public trust. Students benefit from exposure to educators who model resilience, discipline, and service beyond self.

Maryland continues to seek innovative ways to recruit and retain qualified educators. Veterans represent a highly capable and mission-ready workforce already trained in mentorship, instruction, and leadership. Recognizing their service can help encourage more veterans to consider education as a profession while also affirming those who have already made that transition.

Equally important, this legislation helps ensure that veteran educators remain connected to benefits and resources available to them. Too often, individuals who have served are unaware of programs designed to support their continued success. This bill strengthens awareness without imposing obligation.

At its core, Senate Bill 57 is about respect - respect for service, respect for educators, and respect for the role both play in building strong communities. It acknowledges that service to country and service to students are part of the same continuum.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 57.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honorable, Dr. Cashenna A. Cross
Councilwoman-at-Large, City of Glenarden
United States Air Force Veteran (Ret.)
Municipal Advocate
571-719-8784

SB 57 Senator Simonaire_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Kara Contino

Position: FAV

BRYAN W. SIMONAIRE
Legislative District 31
Anne Arundel County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



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The Senate of Maryland ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB 57 – Education Vet Notation

I am Senator Bryan Simonaire presenting SB 57.

This committee is familiar with allowing veteran notations on licenses as we passed 4 bills last year for several different Departments.

This year several other Departments would like to participate in this effort and help more veterans not only by providing acknowledgement of their veteran status but also providing more ways to get important information to our veterans.

Therefore, this bill adds the *Department of Education*.

This bill does two main things:

- 1) Enables the Department to issue licenses or display public profiles with the “Veteran” notation placed on it, and
- 2) If enabled, it establishes an outreach to a participating veteran via the *Department of Veterans and Military Families*. If the applicant wants the Veteran notation and consents to being contacted, they will receive information regarding the applicant’s eligibility for State or federal veterans’ benefits.

This bill is modelled after the existing MVA driver’s license veteran notation program and legislation I passed last year that created the authorization and framework to put a veteran’s notation on state issued professional licenses and state identification cards.

This bill expands the same authorizing process to the Department of Education. The bill provides flexibility for the Department of Education, if

they decide to implement it, on their own schedule and whatever license it deems appropriate.

This legislation provides multiple benefits, including reducing isolation:

This will help with networking and reducing isolation as more people including other veterans will see these licenses are veterans and hopefully reach out more to them.

One of the many factors of veterans' suicide is isolation especially as it pertains to a veterans' own service and experiences. This will allow for public awareness of veterans through thanking them for their service, other veterans seeing it and talking with them and re-enforcing they are not alone.

It provides another tool to reach out to our veteran population with their consent through using their contact information to share eligible benefits with them (this is currently done at the MVA by just sharing their email contact information if available in an Excel file). Note we are only reaching out half our veteran population at this point, and

It is another avenue for the public to show appreciation for their service.

If you think about it, you can't beat this program with all its potential benefits and flexibility.

For all these reasons, I ask for your favorable consideration.

DVMF SB0057 Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Morgan Murphy

Position: FAV



**Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families
Office of the Secretary**

WES MOORE
GOVERNOR

ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR

ED ROTHSTEIN
ACTING SECRETARY

**Senate Bill 57 - Primary and Secondary Educators - Licenses and Public Profiles -
Notation of Veteran Status
SUPPORT**

February 18, 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 military-connected communities. DVMF supports Senate Bill 57 - Primary and Secondary Educators - Licenses and Public Profiles - Notation of Veteran Status, which authorizes the Department of Education to establish a process to include a notation indicating veteran status on licenses and public profiles of primary and secondary educators.

DVMF believes Senate Bill 57 honors Maryland's veterans by providing visible recognition of their service, which enhances their access to critical state and federal benefits. By allowing veterans to opt-in to share their status with executive agencies, SB 57 streamlines communication and improves outreach, ensuring veterans can connect with the programs and resources they have earned. DVMF fully supports this initiative, which aligns with our mission to reduce barriers for veterans and foster greater collaboration across state agencies to serve them effectively. This bill has no fiscal impact.

Thank you for your time, and I respectfully 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
Acting Secretary

SB 57 Pri-Sec Educators Vet Status 021626 docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert Doyle

Position: FAV



NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
MARYLAND FEDERATION

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PRESIDENT

TERESA BAKER
1st VICE PRESIDENT
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

STEVE GROOM
2nd VICE PRESIDENT
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PAST PRESIDENT

DAN MCGRATH
PAST PRESIDENT

PAUL K. SCHWARTZ
VICE PRESIDENT REGION II

**Statement of the Maryland Federation of
National Active and Retired Federal Employees
Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee Hearing, February 18, 2026
On SB 57 Primary & Secondary Educators – Licenses and Public Profiles -
Notification of Veteran Status**

(Position – FAV)

To: Chair Brian Feldman
 Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee

From: Robert Doyle, Chair
 State Legislative Committee
 NARFE – Maryland Federation

I am pleased to provide our written statement today on behalf of the State Legislative Committee of the National and Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) Maryland Federation, representing approximately 317,000 federal annuitants and employees in Maryland. For the continuing benefit of the more than 3100 Maryland NARFE members who are Veterans – and for all Maryland veterans - we support and ask you for a favorable report on SB 57 – Primary and Secondary Educators – Licenses and Public Profiles - Notification of Veteran Status. We thank Senator Bryan Simonaire for introducing this Bill.

HB 57 will establish the process to authorize the Department of Education to include a notation of veteran status on applications for licenses and public profiles. Basically, the Department's application for a license, permit, or registration must allow the applicant to request that a notation of the applicant's veteran status be included on the license, permit, registration, or public profile. An applicant requesting this notation must indicate consent to (1) having a notation of veteran status on the applicant's license, permit, registration, or public profile and (2)-- very importantly -- being contacted by appropriate Executive Branch agencies about eligibility for State or Federal veterans' benefits.

An applicant requesting notation of veteran status must submit (1) a certification of veteran status obtained from the Department of Veterans and Military Families (DVMF); (2) a Federal certificate of release or discharge from active duty; or (3) any other documentation acceptable to the Department of Education.

This bill will result in Department of Education applications and public profiles displaying the status of Veterans as a reminder that they deserve our gratitude and respect for their service. The bill also provides to Veterans a valuable way for them to connect with Federal and State benefits that they have earned through their service to our country.

To help our Maryland Veterans, we support and ask for a favorable Report on SB 57.

Robert M. Doyle, Chair
State Legislative Committee
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