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**SB 167 – Department of Natural Resources –
Licenses, Permits, Registrations, and Public Profiles – Notation of Veteran Status
Environment and Transportation Committee
April 1, 2026
FAVORABLE**

Good afternoon, Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee. My name is Larry Zarzecki, and I am a volunteer with AARP Maryland.

AARP Maryland represents more than 850,000 members statewide and is the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization advocating for Marylanders age 50 and over and their families. We thank Senators Simonaire, Brooks, Harris, and Hester for sponsoring this legislation.

AARP has four areas of focus in serving military families, including fighting fraud, helping with career and employment opportunities through the Military Service Job Center, caregiving, and access to benefits.

SB 167 is a simple, respectful measure that gives veterans the option to have their service recognized through existing Department of Natural Resources licenses, permits, registrations, or public profiles.

By allowing veterans to voluntarily self-identify, with appropriate documentation and consent, this bill creates a clear pathway for agencies to connect veterans with benefits and services they may have earned. Importantly, the bill preserves privacy, requires affirmative consent, and aligns with existing State data-sharing and confidentiality laws.

This legislation does not mandate participation, impose new obligations on veterans, or create significant administrative burdens. Instead, it empowers veterans to choose recognition and access to resources while giving the State a better tool to support them.

For these reasons, SB 167 is a thoughtful, low-cost way to honor veterans' service and improve coordination across State government. We respectfully urge a favorable report.

If you have any questions, please contact Sara Westrick, AARP Maryland Advocacy Director, at swestrick@aarp.org or by calling 410-310-0374.

