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HB 420 – Modernizing Civil Relief for Service Members Act
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
February 17, 2026
FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee. My name is Jim Campbell, president emeritus for AARP Maryland, chair of the AARP Maryland Veterans Committee, and a former state delegate from Baltimore City.

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 Delegates Rogers, Allen, Chisholm, Crutchfield, Hinebaugh, Kipke, Nkongolo, Odom, Phillips, and Sample-Hughes for sponsoring this legislation.

AARP Maryland 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.

House Bill 420 is a comprehensive and forward-looking proposal that removes unnecessary employment barriers for our nation's service members, veterans, and military spouses. It helps veterans and their families by creating a clear, uniform, and statewide system to recognize out-of-state professional licenses held by military-connected individuals, enabling them to work in Maryland more quickly and with far less red tape.

Maryland is home to thousands of active-duty personnel, veterans, and military families who contribute greatly to our communities and our economy. Yet despite their training, experience, and qualifications, many find themselves unable to work when they relocate here because our licensing processes vary across agencies and often move slowly.

HB 420 directly addresses these challenges by creating a uniform licensing pathway applicable across nearly every regulated profession in the state. This bill modernizes and simplifies the process by issuing temporary authorization to work, applying standards broadly and consistently, and using uniform definitions so all agencies operate from the same standards.

The impact of this legislation will be significant. Military spouses, who experience unemployment at disproportionately high rates due to frequent moves, will be able to continue their careers with fewer interruptions. Veterans transitioning to civilian life will gain faster access to the workforce. Service members relocating to Maryland will face fewer bureaucratic hurdles as they support their families and contribute their skills to our communities.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 420.

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