



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

WES MOORE
GOVERNOR
ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR
ED ROTHSTEIN
SECRETARY

**Senate Bill 192 - The Military Family Inclusion Act
FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

April 2, 2026

The Honorable Melissa Wells
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, 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. Our department is proud to submit the Military Family Inclusion Act for your consideration.

This bill is about something simple, but powerful: representation. Senate Bill 192 adds a family caregiver of a service-disabled veteran to the Maryland Commission on Caregiving, recognizing the invisible labor, sacrifice, and resilience of those who care for our wounded warriors. It adds a military-connected youth to the Maryland Youth Advisory Council, ensuring that young people who grow up in military families—often moving frequently, adapting constantly, and shouldering unique responsibilities—are represented. It also modernizes the Veterans Commission to better reflect today's veteran and military family communities and strengthens the Veterans Trust Fund Board governance. Finally, DVMF has requested several technical amendments to remove gendered language, clarify eligibility, and ensure the Governor retains appointment power for the Maryland Youth Advisory Council.

Together, these changes ensure that Maryland's councils and commissions reflect the realities of the people they serve. This bill has no fiscal impact.

Thank you for your attention to this important bill, and I respectfully ask the committee for a favorable report with amendments.

Sincerely,

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

Ed Rothstein
Secretary



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

WES MOORE
GOVERNOR
ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR
ED ROTHSTEIN
SECRETARY

Secretary Ed Rothstein
Senate Bill 192 | Military Family Inclusion Act
Position: Favorable with Amendments

Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 192, the Military Family Inclusion Act.

This bill is about something simple, but powerful: representation.

In Maryland, we often say that we want to support our military-connected communities—but support is strongest when those communities are not just being served, but *being heard*. Senate Bill 192 ensures that the people most impacted by policy decisions have a seat at the table where those decisions are made.

As an Army Veteran, I know that service does not happen in isolation. It involves spouses, children, caregivers, and entire families. Yet too often, the voices of those family members—especially caregivers and youth—are missing from formal decision-making spaces.

This bill changes that.

Senate Bill 192 adds a family caregiver of a service-disabled veteran to the Maryland Commission on Caregiving, recognizing the invisible labor, sacrifice, and resilience of those who care for our wounded warriors. It

adds a military-connected youth to the Maryland Youth Advisory Council, ensuring that young people who grow up in military families—often moving frequently, adapting constantly, and shouldering unique responsibilities—are represented. It also modernizes the Veterans Commission to better reflect today's veteran and military family communities and strengthens the Veterans Trust Fund Board governance.

Finally, DVMF has requested several technical amendments to remove gendered language, clarify eligibility, and ensure the Governor retains appointment power for the Maryland Youth Advisory Council.

Together, these changes ensure that Maryland's councils and commissions reflect the realities of the people they serve.

This bill aligns with our Department's core belief: that no one should be left behind. When families, caregivers, and youth are included in the conversation, our policies become more responsive, more effective, and more human.

Senate Bill 192 does not create new bureaucracy—it creates better listening. It does not add red tape—it adds real voices.

On behalf of the Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families, I respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB 192.

Thank you for your time, and for your commitment to Maryland's military-connected communities, and I respectfully request a favorable report with amendments.

DVMF Amendments to [HB270/SB192](#) - Military Family Inclusion Act (MFIA)

Changes to MFIA:

1. Page 1, line 6: “military-**CONNECTED**”
2. Page 5, line 16: “...must be a resident of the State ~~and a veteran.~~”
3. Page 6, line 29: “who is a service member, ~~appointed by the Department of Veterans and Military Families.~~”

Additions to MFIA:

4. Remove gendered language:
 - a. [9-918](#): “§ 9-918. Chair~~man~~ and vice chair~~man~~ of Commission” & “(a) From among the members of the Commission, the Governor shall appoint a chair~~man~~. (b) A vice chair~~man~~ shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the Commission.
 - b. [9-926](#): “(a) From among its members, the Veterans' Home Commission shall elect a chair~~man~~, a secretary...”
 - c. [9-927](#): “(ii) at the call of the Chair~~man~~, on the Chair~~man~~'s initiative or on the request of at least 4 members.”
 - d. [9-935](#): “ (1) a chair~~man~~; (2) a vice chair~~man~~”