



**State of Maryland**  
**Department of State Police**  
Government Affairs Unit  
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

**POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**DATE:** February 17, 2026  
**BILL NUMBER:** House Bill 420      **POSITION:** Letter of Information  
**BILL TITLE:** Modernizing Civil Relief for Service Members Act

**REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

This legislation seeks to expand business license portability in Maryland for active-duty service members and their spouses by permitting individuals to practice certain occupations and professions in the State using out-of-state licenses, without first meeting Maryland’s licensing requirements. While the Maryland State Police (MSP) and the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) support efforts to assist military families, this legislation raises public safety, regulatory, and enforcement concerns.

Under current law, professional licenses issued by other states are generally not recognized in Maryland. Individuals holding out-of-state credentials are required to obtain Maryland licensure before practicing. Licensing boards retain full authority to determine whether applicants meet Maryland-specific standards and may require completion of the full licensure process to include testing and observation. These safeguards ensure consistency, accountability, and public protection.

The MSP Automotive Safety Enforcement Division is responsible for licensing and regulating vehicle safety inspectors and inspection stations. Inspection certifications issued by other states are based on that state’s specific regulations and do not reflect knowledge of Maryland’s more comprehensive safety inspection standards. Maryland requires applicants to complete a written examination and successfully perform a supervised practical inspection to demonstrate competency. Applicants are currently afforded up to six months to complete the practical examination. This process cannot be condensed into a 30-day timeframe without compromising regulatory integrity and the MSP does not issue temporary inspection licenses. Eliminating these requirements risks allowing unqualified individuals to inspect vehicles, potentially placing unsafe vehicles on Maryland roadways and endangering public safety.

House Bill 420 further requires the OSFM to certify active-duty service members or their spouses as explosive handlers and electrical inspectors based solely on out-of-state licensure. Maryland law requires all explosives licensees to undergo comprehensive criminal background checks, a standard that exceeds those in many jurisdictions. OSFM requires applicants to pass a written examination covering safety and regulatory requirements and to secure employment with a licensed Maryland explosives company prior to licensure. House Bill 420 would bypass these critical safeguards, weakening established oversight and increasing public safety risks.

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Additionally, electrical codes vary significantly among states. The OSFM currently licenses nongovernmental electrical inspectors only after applicants demonstrate proficiency in the National Electrical Code (NFPA 70, 2017 edition) through formal testing. Granting reciprocity to inspectors trained under different code editions introduces unnecessary risks and inconsistencies. Such disparities may result in conflicting inspections, regulatory confusion, and increased challenges for property owners, contractors, and permitting authorities.

While MSP and OSFM recognize the importance of supporting military families, HB 420 undermines Maryland's established licensing standards and public safety protections. The bill would allow individuals to practice in highly regulated fields without demonstrating adequate knowledge of Maryland-specific laws, codes, and safety requirements.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of State Police urges the Committee to consider this information when deliberating on House Bill 420.