

# **Maryland Military Coalition HB0844 Written Testimo**

Uploaded by: David Lutzow

Position: FAV



# MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

*Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy*

March 30, 2026

The Honorable William Smith Jr.  
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: **Request for FAVORABLE Report** – HB0844 – Motor Vehicle Registration - Fee Exemption - Unemployable Disabled Veterans

Dear Chair Smith and distinguished members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee  
On behalf of the members of the Maryland Military Coalition<sup>1</sup> (MMC) I write to recommend a **FAVORABLE report** by the Committee on **HB0844 – Motor Vehicle Registration - Fee Exemption - Unemployable Disabled Veterans**, sponsored by Delegate Mike Griffith. **The House unanimously passed this bill.**

Delegate Mike Griffith's bill aims to expand benefits to veterans with a service-connected unemployability rating (typically 50-99% but compensated at 100%). This legislation addresses a gap for veterans who are rated as unemployable but may not have a 100% combined disability rating, extending them the same fee-exempt benefits as fully disabled veterans. Two other related bills, HB0716 (introduced in the 2024 regular session) and HB0248 (introduced in the 2025 regular session) also requested vehicle registration fee exemptions for one vehicle, but neither bill passed. The House unanimously passed this bill.

Maryland State Statutes – Transportation – Section §13–619.4 (c) and §13–619.4 (d) (1) and (2)<sup>2</sup> states:

- The Administration may issue a special disabled veteran registration plate that does not display the international symbol of access in recognition of the vehicle owner's service-connected disability to an individual who is a veteran and is between 50% and 99%, inclusive, service-connected disabled.
- The Administration:
  - Shall charge the annual registration fee and surcharge otherwise required under this title for special disabled veteran registration plates issued under this section.
  - May not charge or retain any additional fee for the special registration plates.

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<sup>1</sup> See attached list of member organizations

<sup>2</sup> [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Laws/StatuteText?article=gtr&section=13-619.4&enactments=false#:~:text=\(c\)%20The%20Administration%20may%20issue,inclusive%2C%20service%20%93connected%20disabled.&text=\(2\)%20May%20not%20charge%20or,for%20the%20special%20registration%20plates.&text=\(2\)%20Shall%20state%20E2%80%9CDisabled,on%20the%20special%20registration%20plates.&text=\(ii\)%20If%20the%20transferor%20and,13%E2%80%93952%20of%20this%20title.&text=\(ii\)%20The%20Administration%20may%20not,registration%20plates%20under%20this%20section.](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Laws/StatuteText?article=gtr&section=13-619.4&enactments=false#:~:text=(c)%20The%20Administration%20may%20issue,inclusive%2C%20service%20%93connected%20disabled.&text=(2)%20May%20not%20charge%20or,for%20the%20special%20registration%20plates.&text=(2)%20Shall%20state%20E2%80%9CDisabled,on%20the%20special%20registration%20plates.&text=(ii)%20If%20the%20transferor%20and,13%E2%80%93952%20of%20this%20title.&text=(ii)%20The%20Administration%20may%20not,registration%20plates%20under%20this%20section.)

Subject: Request FAVORABLE Report – HB0844 – Motor Vehicle Registration - Fee Exemption - Unemployable Disabled Veterans

While currently, a service-connected disabled veteran with a rating of 50-99% and unemployable, receives a free license plate and/or placard, the current fee for a 3-year registration (based upon vehicles weight) is between \$361.50 and \$574.50. This is significant savings for Total Disability Individual Unemployability (TDIU) veterans who are facing financial challenges.

Conducting Google searches, all 50 states provide some form of registration fee exemptions for 100% disable veterans, and very few offer this fee exemption for more than one vehicle. Of the 50 states, only seven do not reference TDIU veterans, just those veterans that are totally (100%) disabled – this includes Maryland. The seven states that do not reference TDIU veterans are Arkansas, Hawaii, Maryland, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. No state is exempt from fiscal challenges; however, 43 states have taken positive actions to ensure TDIU veterans are not left behind, regardless of their fiscal challenges.

Maryland **must be** the 44<sup>th</sup> state that shows our TDIU veterans that they are not forgotten. This is why the Maryland Military Coalition **strongly supports** HB0844 and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report from the Judicial Proceedings 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 please visit our [website](#).

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

Respectfully,

*David Lutzow*

David Lutzow

Senior Master Sergeant (Ret), U.S. Air Force

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

**HB844\_Veterans.pdf**

Uploaded by: Veterans Caucus Maryland

Position: FAV



MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
VETERANS CAUCUS

March 30, 2026

Senator William Smith, Chair  
Judicial Proceeding Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB844, Motor Vehicle Registration – Fee Exemption – Unemployable Disabled Veterans  
Hearing Date: April 1, 2026

Dear Chairman Smith,

Please let this letter serve as notice of the support of the Maryland General Assembly Veterans Caucus for House Bill 844.

After review by our respective legislative committee, the Veterans Caucus believes that the above-mentioned legislation would provide a valuable benefit to the veterans of the State of Maryland and requests a favorable report.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin E. Brooks".

Senator Benjamin Brooks  
Senate Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Rogers".

Delegate Mike Rogers  
House Chair

cc: Delegate Mike Griffith