



WES MOORE
GOVERNOR
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

STATE OF MARYLAND
MILITARY DEPARTMENT
FIFTH REGIMENT ARMORY
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201-2288

JANEEN L. BIRCKHEAD
MAJOR GENERAL
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

February 18, 2026

Chairman J. Sandy Bartlett
House Judiciary Committee
100 Taylor House Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Bartlett and Members of The Committee:

The Maryland Military Department respectfully requests an unfavorable report for HB 1319 – Public Safety – Militia – Active-Duty Combat (Defend the Guard).

HB 1319 poses significant fiscal and readiness risks to the Maryland National Guard. Limiting federal activations risks signaling that Maryland is unwilling or unable to meet federal requirements. Such a perception could result in decreased federal funding and reduced access to modernization programs, training opportunities, infrastructure improvements, military construction, and loss of force structure (units stationed in our communities). A reduction in federal support would not only weaken the Maryland National Guard's ability to fulfill federal missions but would also degrade its capacity to respond effectively to state emergencies.

The Maryland Military Department strongly opposes House Bill 1319 and urges the Committee to report it unfavorably.

The point of contact for this letter is Dr. Tony Campbell, reachable at (443) 956-0108, or tony.campbell1@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Janeen L. Birckhead in cursive script.

Janeen L. Birckhead
Major General, Maryland National Guard
The Adjutant General