

HB 1319: Public Safety - Militia - Active Duty Combat (Defend the Guard): Please vote to **SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **SUPPORT HB 1319**.

HB 1319 would not restrict the Governor's authority to deploy the militia for state active duty missions, such as disaster response, civil unrest, or other domestic emergencies within Maryland.

For too long, Maryland National Guard members have been deployed to **overseas conflicts** without a formal congressional declaration of war, as required by Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. This has led to prolonged engagements, significant sacrifices by Guard families, and erosion of the constitutional balance between Congress and the executive branch. The "Defend the Guard" measure restores the founders' intent: only Congress, through a clear declaration, should commit state militia to foreign combat.

This bill protects Maryland citizens serving in the Guard from unauthorized deployments, honors their service by ensuring deployments meet constitutional standards, and reinforces congressional war powers—without preventing necessary state-level or defensive federal actions.

Maryland should lead in defending constitutional principles and safeguarding our citizen-soldiers. I respectfully ask you to **vote in favor of HB 1319**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this vital public safety, constitutional, and military family issue.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals