

In Support of HB 1319 (Favorable), “Defend the Guard,”

Dylan Griffith
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District 36

House Health and Government Operations Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 1319, *Defend the Guard*. As a combat veteran, I have witnessed firsthand the sacrifices made by those who serve, and I understand the importance of ensuring that our National Guard is used properly and in accordance with the Constitution.

Maryland’s National Guard, like many state Guard units across the country, has been overused in conflicts that do not align with its purpose. The National Guard exists to serve and protect Maryland, yet its repeated deployments overseas weaken its ability to respond to emergencies at home.

This bill is a necessary step in restoring the Guard’s proper role because:

- It simply reinforces that the National Guard should only be deployed when Congress has fulfilled its constitutional duty to declare war, **rather than at the discretion of the Executive Branch.**
- **It does not interfere with the ability of the Governor or President to respond to national emergencies;** rather, it ensures that the Guard remains fully available to serve Maryland when needed most.
- It is a **bipartisan initiative with widespread support across the nation**, proving that this is not a partisan issue, but a matter of constitutional integrity and responsible governance. In fact, Constitutional law professor and Congressman Jamie Raskin introduced nearly identical bills in 2009 and 2010 as a state senator.

As someone who has served in combat, I know the burden placed on our troops and their families. It is time to ensure that our National Guard is used as intended—to defend the people and interests of Maryland first and foremost and our country, when the threat is urgent. I urge you to support HB 1319 and uphold the constitutional principles that safeguard both our servicemembers and our state.

Respectfully,

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