



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

SENATE BILL 258 — SUPPORT
Property Tax Exemption - Disabled Veterans
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
January 14, 2021

Good morning Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. My name is Patrick Guibao, Vice President and Legislative Director of the Maryland Military Coalition.

The Maryland Military Coalition is a nonprofit, all volunteer, Veterans advocacy group representing the interests of Maryland Veterans, Service Members, their families, and survivors. The Coalition consists of 16 military and veteran's organizations with over 100,000 members. We represent about one-fourth of Maryland's uniformed services community -- including currently serving, veterans, retirees -- their families and survivors.

The Maryland Military Coalition **supports Senate Bill 258.**

The bill would expand the existing property tax credit for disabled veterans by lowering the threshold from 100% disability to 80% disability. Importantly, the legislation would apply not only to disabled active duty service members and disabled veterans but to qualifying surviving spouses of individuals who died in the line of duty.

An 80% permanent disability rating reflects severe disability, where the life and livelihood of the Veteran is significantly impacted. Such a Veteran is far less likely to be able to gain and maintain employment and is far more likely to require the assistance of a caregiver. Since the caregiver is often the Veteran's spouse, the spouse is similarly disadvantaged in maintaining meaningful employment. The cumulative effect exacerbates the challenge of owning and remaining in a home.

Veteran's with disability rated 80% or higher are dramatically worse than any other. Their cumulative, permanent medical conditions dramatically, often devastatingly, impact the rest of their lives. They are our most deserving, yet most vulnerable citizens.

The Maryland Military Coalition believes we must honor the service and acknowledge the sacrifice of our severely disabled Veterans. Senate Bill 258 does so, by providing greater economic viability for a severely disabled Veteran and the Veterans' family caregivers by ensuring their ability to afford and remain in their home. The legislation allows our veterans who have given so much in the defense of the nation and permits them to enjoy greater benefits of financial security.

We respectfully request a favorable report for Senate Bill 258.

For questions or additional information, please feel free to contact me at patguibao@icloud.com or by calling 443.949.6322.

(Signature Page Follows)

Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition


Air Force Sergeants Association


American Military Society


Association of the United States Navy


Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service



Disabled American Veterans


Distinguished Flying Cross Association


Fleet Reserve Association


Jewish War Veterans of the USA


Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association


Military Officers Association of America


Military Order of the Purple Heart


National Association for Black Veterans


Naval Enlisted Reserve Association


NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers


Society of Military Widows


Veterans of Foreign Wars