

HOUSE BILL 455

P1

5lr2540
CF SB 85

By: Delegates Kaiser, Alston, Attar, Cardin, Charkoudian, Fennell, Foley, Kaufman, McComas, Palakovich Carr, Simmons, Spiegel, Taylor, Valderrama, Williams, Wims, ~~and Woorman~~ Woorman, Bagnall, Bhandari, Chisholm, Cullison, Guzzone, Hill, Hutchinson, S. Johnson, Kerr, Kipke, Lopez, Martinez, M. Morgan, Pena-Melnyk, Reilly, Rosenberg, Szeliga, Taveras, White Holland, and Woods

Introduced and read first time: January 20, 2025

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 22, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Braille Flag Memorial Act of 2025**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Veterans and Military Families to
4 designate a location for an American braille tactile flag to be placed on the grounds
5 of one or more State veterans' cemeteries; and generally relating to State veterans'
6 cemeteries and American braille tactile flags.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

8 Article – State Government

9 Section 9–906(a)

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

12 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

13 Article – State Government

14 Section 9–906(b)

15 Annotated Code of Maryland

16 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

17 BY adding to

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 Article – State Government
 2 Section 9–906(j)
 3 Annotated Code of Maryland
 4 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

5 Preamble

6 WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that there are
 7 approximately 130,000 blind veterans in the United States who are legally blind, and more
 8 than one million who have low vision that causes a loss of ability to perform necessary daily
 9 activities; and

10 WHEREAS, The American braille tactile flag was created by the Kansas Braille
 11 Transcription Institute in Wichita, Kansas, and through the American Braille Flag Project,
 12 to allow blind Americans and blind veterans to experience the American flag; and

13 WHEREAS, Maryland has five State veterans’ cemeteries visited by thousands of
 14 people annually; and

15 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland is known as a state that recognizes the great
 16 contributions of our blind community and honors the dedication of our uniformed services
 17 members and veterans; now, therefore,

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 19 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 Article – State Government

21 9–906.

22 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

23 (2) **“AMERICAN BRAILLE TACTILE FLAG” MEANS A TACTILE FLAG**
 24 **DESIGNED TO ALLOW BLIND PEOPLE TO EXPERIENCE THE AMERICAN FLAG,**
 25 **INCLUDING A FLAG CREATED BY THE KANSAS BRAILLE TRANSCRIPTION INSTITUTE.**

26 (3) “Eligible dependent” means:

27 (i) a child who meets the requirements stated in 38 C.F.R. §
 28 38.620(e); or

29 (ii) a parent who meets the requirements stated in 38 C.F.R. §
 30 38.620(i).

31 ~~[(3)]~~ (4) “Eligible spouse” means a spouse who meets the requirements
 32 stated in 38 C.F.R. § 38.620(e).

1 [(4) (5) “State veterans’ cemetery” means a cemetery that the
2 Department establishes under this section.

3 [(5) (6) In this section and in § 9–907 of this subtitle, “veteran” means
4 an individual who:

5 (i) served other than dishonorably on active duty in the armed
6 forces of the United States; or

7 (ii) served other than dishonorably as a member of the State militia
8 ordered into active service of the United States by order of the President and was killed in
9 the line of duty.

10 [(6) (7) “Washington Cemetery” means the Civil War cemetery grounds
11 authorized by Chapter 213 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1870.

12 (b) The Department may establish one or more cemeteries in the State for the
13 burial of veterans and their eligible spouse or dependents as authorized by the Secretary.

14 **(J) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DESIGNATE A LOCATION FOR AN AMERICAN
15 BRAILLE TACTILE FLAG TO BE PLACED IN ONE OR MORE STATE VETERANS’
16 CEMETERIES AS AUTHORIZED BY THE SECRETARY TO HONOR MEMBERS OF THE
17 UNIFORMED SERVICES, VETERANS, AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO
18 ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED.**

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
20 October 1, 2025.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.