

**Bill 349 – Property Tax – Exemption for Disabled Veterans – Percentage of
Disability
Budget and Taxation Committee
February 12, 2020**

Good Afternoon Chairwoman King and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. I Tammy Bresnahan Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland and a service-disabled combat Veteran. I am here today to support SB 357 – Property Tax – Exemption for Disabled Veterans – Percentage of Disability.

Sb 349 expands eligibility for a property tax exemption for the dwelling house of a disabled veteran to include veterans with at least a certain percentage of service connected disability; providing for the application of this Act; and generally relating to a property tax exemption for the dwelling house of a disabled veteran.

Specifically, this legislation changes the property tax exemption threshold from a 100% permanent, service-connected disability rating to an 80% permanent, service-connected disability rating.

An 80% permanent disability rating reflects a severe disability, where the life and livelihood of the Veteran will be significantly impacted. Such a Veteran is far less likely to be able 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 also disadvantaged in maintaining meaningful employment. The cumulative effect exacerbates the challenge of owning and remaining in a home.

AARP believes we must honor the service and acknowledge the sacrifice of our severely disabled Veterans. Senate Bill 349 does so, by providing greater economic viability for a severely disabled Veteran and the Veterans caregiver by ensuring their ability to afford and remain in their home.

We respectfully request a favorable report for Senate Bill 357. For questions or additional information, please feel free to contact Tammy Bresnahan, Director of Advocacy at tbresnahan@arp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.