



THE AMERICAN LEGION
Department of Maryland
Legislative Commission

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**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 0114 WAIVER OF ADOPTION FEES
BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENT and TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 12, 2020**

Delegate Barve and distinguished members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, The American Legion now in its second century of service feel House Bill 114 would be a profound aid to our veteran community and first responders as well.

Pet animals are almost family in scores of households throughout our nation. This is especially true for our veterans. Ground combat forces are especially entwined with dogs where in many cases these animals have been lifesaving on the battle fields.

In reviewing the *Fiscal and Policy Note* accompanying SB128, similar to the language in this bill, some "local and county shelters already waive adoption fees for certain animals or for special adoption programs, and, additionally Anne Arundel County partners with the 'Pets for Patriots' program."

It is The American Legion's belief the addition of a pet may be the best medication for a veteran suffering from such maladies as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The use of the Maryland Driver's License administered by the Maryland Motor Vehicles Administration with the stamp VETERAN on the front is more than adequate in terms of legitimizing identity status.

In representation of more than 48,000 active duty personnel, veterans and their families in Maryland's 23 counties and the Baltimore City we urge a favorable report and thank delegate Long for his empathy to both the veteran community and shelter bound pets. Thank you.

Pat Guibao

Patrick J. Guibao
Chair
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