

Statement of Jayson L. Spiegel
In Support of HB0591
Property Tax Exemption – Disabled Veterans
February 2, 2021

My name is Jayson Spiegel. I am a Gaithersburg resident and retired after 28 years commissioned service in the Army and Army Reserve. I am a former Executive Director of the Reserve Officers Association of America and Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. I am responsible for social media activities of the Maryland Democratic Party Veterans Leadership Council. I am speaking in my personal capacity.

I urge the House of Delegates to pass SB0591, a bill to change the definition of a disabled veteran entitled to property tax exemption from 100% to 80% disability.

Even an 80% Veterans Administration disability represents a profound challenge to sustained employment. As a result, this legislation will expand eligibility for financial support in the disabled veteran population at a time of great economic uncertainty. Many potential beneficiaries of the legislation live on a fixed income and likely have limited employment because of disability.

Expanding eligibility for an exemption on property taxes will reduce the living expenses of disabled, which increases the likelihood of their remaining in their homes. This is particularly important because those homes may have been retrofitted or modified to accommodate disabilities, e.g., ramps, chair lifts for stairs, lower cabinets, bathrooms, etc.

During the midst of a pandemic, providing housing and economic stability to this population is necessary.

I want to thank Delegate Watson for his leadership on this issue and urge the passage of HB0591.

Thank you.