



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 230

Health Occupations - Service Members, Veterans, & Military Spouses -
Temporary Licensure, Certification, Registration, & Permitting

February 1, 2022

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee:

My name is CAPTAIN Lynn Nash, and I'm a nurse. I am the Communications Director for the Maryland Military Coalition and I served 30 years in both the Army and the United States Public Health Service (PHS), retiring in 2017. Most recently, I've been a volunteer vaccinator with Maryland Responds, the Medical Reserve Corps, where I have personally given over 15,000 COVID vaccines. As a licensed nurse in Vermont, I am only able to vaccinate now because Governor Hogan used his Emergency Powers as part of the Emergency Declaration to allow practitioners from other states without a Maryland license to help.

Currently, Maryland regulates twenty health occupation categories- one of which is nursing-which having the most problems in timeliness. Senate Bill 230 allows for the health occupation boards to issue a full or temporary expedited license, certification or registration to a service member, veteran or military spouse ***if they meet the requirements.***

When I was a federal nurse, my Vermont license was recognized—I didn't have to get re-licensed every time I was reassigned. Today, to practice or serve as nursing faculty in Maryland, where there is a critical nursing shortage, I would have to go through the onerous and frankly expensive process of getting licensed in Maryland. I would need to submit passport photos, an application with a permanent address, a completed Maryland fingerprint card, an application for a national criminal record check and \$140.00. I looked at the requirements and said "no way" to getting a license just to volunteer. The cost would be in addition to maintaining my original Vermont license, which costs \$190.00.

This is a good bill, especially in the midst of a critical shortage of nurses in Maryland, but you are missing a huge group of people especially if you are attempting to improve the number of available practitioners in the stateso I have two asks:

1. Please **change the term "armed forces" to uniformed services.** As you know there are eight Uniformed Services, but only six "armed forces". You are forgetting the active-duty members of NOAA and the U.S. Public Health Service and their spouses. There are significant numbers of both of these services in our state, and they should be included in the text of this bill. I know...I represent the 1200 PHS officers who live in Maryland on the Coalition.

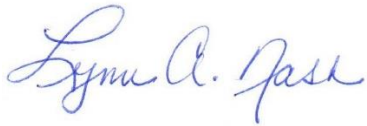
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2. In addition, please reconsider and **remove the bill's restriction on "veterans"** which is currently limited to retirement within the year of their application, especially in light of current critical nursing shortages. Often the first year of retirement is "the honeymoon", most don't retirees don't make the decision to get a follow-on job until we have had a little bit of time to attack the "to do" list.

The Maryland Military Coalition, is a voluntary, non-partisan organization representing 18 veteran service organizations who, in turn, serve over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men and women and their families. The Coalition strongly supports SB 230 and asks for your **FAVORABLE** report.

Thank you to Senator Jackson for sponsoring this important legislation.


Very respectfully,


A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynn A. Nash, CAPTAIN, U.S. Public Health Service (Ret)
Communications Director


Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition


Air Force Sergeants Association


American Military Society

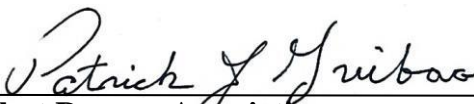

American Minority Veterans Research Project


Association of the United States Navy



Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service

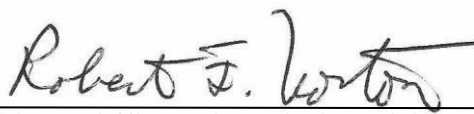

Disabled American Veterans



Distinguished Flying Cross Association


Fleet Reserve Association


Jewish War Veterans of the USA


Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association

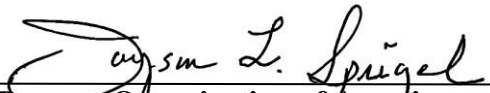

Military Officers Association of America

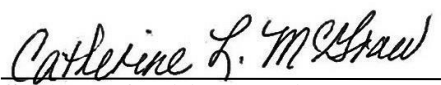

Military Order of the Purple Heart


National Association for Black Veterans


Reserve Organization of America


NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers


Reserve Organization of America


Society of Military Widows


Veterans of Foreign Wars