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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Testimony in Support of House Bill 167 - Commission to Establish a Maryland Women Veterans Memorial

Good afternoon Madam Chairwoman, Madam Vice Chairwoman, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on House Bill 167 - Commission to Establish a Maryland Women Veterans Memorial.

This bill would establish a commission to create a Maryland Women Veterans Memorial. As of now, there is currently no memorial specifically honoring the Maryland women who have served and continue to serve in all branches of our military. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) reports that women represent approximately 20% of new recruits, about 15% of active duty military members, and 18% of the guard and reserve forces. NCSL also reports that, as of March 2019, at least 28 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have enacted legislation to establish a female veteran program, designate a commemorative day or month, or provide for special license plates. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, in 2016, women veterans represented approximately 9% of the U.S. veteran population and approximately 13% of Maryland's veteran population.

It is past time that we honor the service, dedication, honor, and sacrifice of these valiant women who have served in our armed forces. I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 167.