



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 29, 2024

Honorable Pamela G. Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

SB 712—State-owned Nursing Homes-Deficiencies, Citations and Fines-Reporting Requirements- Request for Favorable Report

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Military Coalition, and as its Communications Director, I am submitting testimony in favor of this bill. SB 712 requires that the Department, in this case the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, to provide notification when a contractor that they employ to operate a state nursing home receives a deficiency or adopts a plan of correction. When receiving a deficiency, the Secretary or his designee must notify the Governor, the Finance and Health and Government Operations Committees, and those assembly members that represent the district where the nursing home is located within 15 days; the plan of correction within 30 days.

Maryland is home to Charlotte Hall, currently the only nursing home that the state operates. It has both a 168-bed assisted living program as well as 318 [skilled nursing home beds](#). During COVID-19, Charlotte Hall residents suffered more than surrounding nursing homes as the home incurred more COVID-related deaths than the national average. When the situation came to light, inspectors suspected that residents had also been abused. The contractor was fired, a new team was brought in and all residents were evaluated.

Since that time, Charlotte Hall has made steady progress, however, there continues to be some problems, which the [Secretary himself](#) said would take years to rectify. Today, the home has a 1 star out of 5 star quality rating by [Medicare](#). There were 18 complaints in the last 3 years, and the facility had 45 citations in that same period.

Charlotte Hall accepts not only veterans, but also their spouses, as only one of a handful of veteran homes do. The residents represent the most vulnerable of populations, often being economically disadvantaged. It is imperative that they be protected. More importantly, any future veterans' homes that will be built need to have the same oversight and protections.

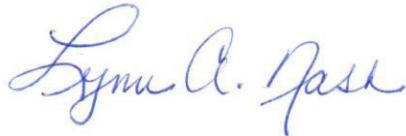
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Our veterans need to be treated with dignity and respect. As a nurse, and a previous Director of Nursing of a 100-bed extended care facility, I know that the events that took place at Charlotte Hall never should have been allowed to happen. Transferring responsibility for notifications to the Secretary is a step in the right direction.

The Maryland Military Coalition, is a voluntary, non-partisan organization representing 21 veteran service organizations who, in turn, serve over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men and women and their families. The Coalition strongly supports SB 712 and asks for your *favorable report*.

Thank you to Senator Bailey for sponsoring this important legislation.

Respectfully,

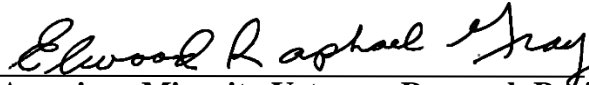
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN
CAPT (R), U.S. Public Health Service
Communications Director
Maryland Military Coalition Member Organizations Follow


Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition


Air Force Sergeants Association


American Military Society


American Minority Veterans Research Project

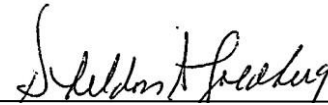

Association of the United States Navy



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


Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce


Military Officers Association of America


Military Order of the Purple Heart


Montford Point Marines of America



National Association for Black Veterans


Naval Enlisted Reserve Association


NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers


Reserve Organization of America


Society of Military Widows


National Active and Retired Federal Employees
Veterans Affairs Directorate, NARFE MD


Veterans of Foreign Wars