



## **House Bill 598 – Discrimination - Military Status - Prohibition**

### **Information**

Maryland REALTORS® offers the following comments on HB 598.

This bill aims to prevent discrimination against military personnel and their families in the provision of housing under State Government Article 20-702 and mortgage lending under 20-707, among other areas of state law, by making one's military status a protected class.

With protected classes, real estate professionals can neither favor nor disfavor consumers based upon the protected trait or status. Currently, our members have noted that they often provided favorable treatment of military applicants, by waiving rental application fees or by loosening credit or deposit requirements for members of the military. Were military status to be made a protected class, they are concerned that they would no longer be able to offer specialized services or beneficial treatment to members of the military.

Military service does receive some protected status under current Fair Housing laws regarding Source of Income, which prohibits differential treatment based upon use of a Veteran's Administration Loan to purchase a home or in use of military income to qualify for rental housing.

REALTORS® denounce discrimination against the men and women of our military and their families. However, we do see instances where making military status a protected class could result in the loss of certain preferential treatment currently provided to members of the military in housing.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments as you review HB 598.

**For more information contact**  
**[lisa.may@mdrealtor.org](mailto:lisa.may@mdrealtor.org) or [christa.mcgee@mdrealtor.org](mailto:christa.mcgee@mdrealtor.org)**