



**Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families
Office of the Secretary**

**WES MOORE
GOVERNOR**

**ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR**

**ANTHONY C. WOODS
SECRETARY**

**Senate Bill 309- Department of Veterans and Military Families - Online Registry
Letter of Information**

February 17, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families (DVMF) is committed to leading veterans and their families through life's transitions, making Maryland the best state for the military-connected communities. DVMF fulfills its mission through five core programs: the Service and Benefits Program, which helps veterans access federal, state, and local earned benefits; Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, offering assisted living and skilled nursing care; the Cemetery and Memorial Program, providing dignified resting places and maintaining memorials honoring Maryland's veterans; the Communications, Outreach, and Advocacy Program, fostering connection and awareness; and the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, offering financial assistance to veterans and their families in need. These programs reflect Maryland's commitment to honoring and empowering its military-connected community.

The Department respectfully submits this letter of information for Senate Bill 309, which establishes an online registry to provide information to Veterans, service members, military families, and other interested individuals.

While the Department recognizes and appreciates the intent behind this legislation, to enhance communication and outreach to Maryland's military-connected community, there are operational and fiscal challenges presented by this bill. Below, I have outlined those challenges and appreciate Senator Simonaire for engaging with DVMF and DoIT to identify any necessary alterations.

Challenges Presented with Current Proposal

1. Undefined Costs & Procurement Hurdles

THE WINELAND BUILDING, FOURTH FLOOR
16 FRANCIS STREET, ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TOLL FREE: 866-793-1577 • ANNAPOLIS: 410-260-3838 • FAX: 410-216-7928

veterans.maryland.gov
TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

- Although we have submitted a \$200,000 fiscal note, this is only a preliminary estimate. The actual cost cannot be fully defined until we develop specifications with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT).
- Given the complexity of the registry's required functionality, a custom system would likely need to be designed, requiring significant investment beyond our initial estimate.

2. **Timeline & Procurement Constraints**

- The bill requires the registry be operational by December 31, 2025. However, the procurement process alone—including approval from DoIT and the Department of General Services Office of State Procurement (DGS OSP)—is expected to take at least six months, significantly constraining the development timeline.
- The technical integration required to link the registry through the website, incorporate Granicus (our existing system), and ensure compliance with state security protocols adds additional delays beyond the stated deadline.

3. **Existing Communication Infrastructure**

- DVMF currently utilizes Granicus for digital outreach, which already provides insight into distribution list size, new subscribers, and opt-outs.
- The proposed registry would require us to collect additional personal data, including whether an individual is a Veteran, Active Duty, Reserve Component member, Maryland Defense Force member, spouse, dependent child, or other interested individual—and thus also require us to develop secure data storage methods.

Again, I appreciate the sponsor's collaboration and look forward to ongoing conversations to address these challenges.

Sincerely,



Anthony C. Woods
Secretary