



NAACP Maryland State Conference  
P.O. Box 9702  
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**Support: HB 176 (Public Schools - Student Information - Availability to Military Recruiters)**

March 3, 2010

On behalf of Maryland State NAACP President Gerald Stansbury and all members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Maryland, this testimony is being submitted in strong support to HOUSE BILL 176 that requires public schools that administer the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) to choose a specified reporting option for military recruiter contact; requires public schools that administer the ASVAB to send a written notice containing specified information to the ASVAB representative coordinating the administration of the ASVAB and to notify students and the parent or guardian of students taking the ASVAB of release of student information requirements.

This legislation is about the simple idea that parents need to have the final say over the release of information regarding their children. This especially applies to black families and low income households whose children seem to be the target of military recruiters. We believe military recruiters currently administer the test in schools with students whose families have few financial resources and limited education more than they do in schools where families have greater economic and education opportunities. Military recruiters rarely, if ever show up at some high schools in the state like Chevy Chase high School, while they appear to be permanent fixtures in Baltimore City and Prince George's schools. From a Pentagon data sheet we know that, last year, 148 took the ASVAB test at Largo Sr. High School in Prince George's County while nobody took it at Churchill High School in Montgomery County.

The bottom line is that this bill simply calls for the selection of Option 8 -- and that means that test results are prohibited from being automatically forwarded to military recruiters. The legislation won't discourage the administration of the test. If students or parents want to share their results with recruiters, they're free to do so. This legislation puts the final decision regarding the release of student information in the hands of parents rather than the Department of Defense -- something that is equally important to people of all colors.

A military career may represent a great opportunity for all Americans, especially poor minority and disadvantaged kids. There is no reason to allow their test results and other private information to be released to military recruiters by anyone other than themselves and their parents -- which is the situation today without this legislation. With this legislation, students will have the advantages of

taking a comprehensive vocational aptitude test and discussing the test results -- their strengths and potential career choices -- with their guidance counselor and their parents.

Should our teenagers then decide to explore a military career, they can take their test results to a recruiting station. The bill changes an unfair circumvention of student and parental privacy rights into a win-win situation. We strongly support passage of House Bill 176 now before the General Assembly.

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