



THE MILITARY COALITION

April 30, 2015

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Takano
House Committee on Veterans Affairs
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Wyden and Boozman and Representative Takano:

The Military Coalition is a consortium of uniformed services and veterans associations representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members and their families and survivors. We thank you for introducing S.602 and H.R.1141, the GI Bill Fairness Act of 2015. Your bill amends Title 38 to consider time spent by reservists “while receiving medical care from the Secretary of Defense as active duty for purposes of eligibility for Post-9/11 Educational Assistance, and for other purposes.”

Members of the National Guard or Reserve who are disabled on active duty orders and receiving medical care – medical hold status – should not lose eligibility for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

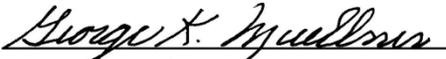
The DoD’s Reserve Forces Policy Board recommended to the Secretary of Defense a change in law on the basis of equity. TMC agrees. Currently, when a Guard or Reserve servicemember is injured or wounded in a combat theatre, the member transitions on orders to a medical hold status under 10 USC 12301(h). This stops accrual of active duty time that would count towards Post-9/11 GI Bill entitlement. If the member is not discharged but returns to service, none of the time spent in medical hold counts as qualifying service. In effect, the Reserve member is penalized for a line-of-duty wound, injury or illness. Coincidentally, if the same member were discharged from service because of the disability, the member would earn 100% of the benefit – assuming 30 days continuous active duty service.

Reservists continue to honorably serve wherever and whenever they are needed. Closing this oversight in current statute would allow all service members to continue to accrue the educational benefits earned in service while receiving medical care from the DoD under Section 12301(h) of Title 10.

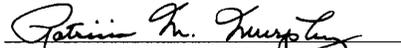
The Military Coalition thanks you for working to end unequal treatment of members of the National Guard and Reserve. TMC pledges its full support for enactment of S.602 and H.R.1141 this year.

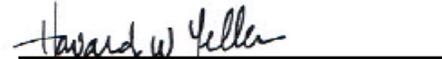
Sincerely,

The Military Coalition
(signatures enclosed)
Cf: House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees


Air Force Association


Air Force Sergeants Association


Air Force Women Officers
Associated


Army Aviation Assn. of America


AMSUS, the Society of Federal Health Professionals

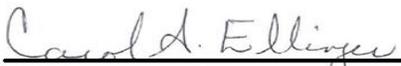

Assn. of the US Army


Association of the United States Navy

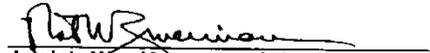

Commissioned Officers Assn. of the US Public
Health Service, Inc


CWOA, US Coast Guard


Fleet Reserve Assn.


Gold Star Wives of America


Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans
of America


Jewish War Veterans of the USA


Marine Corps League


Marine Corps Reserve Association


Military Officers Assn. of America


Military Order of the Purple Heart


National Association for
Uniformed Services


National Guard Assn. of the US


National Military Family Association

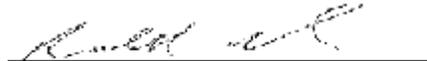

Naval Enlisted Reserve Assn.


Non Commissioned Officers Assn.
of the United States of America

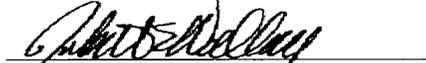

Reserve Officers Association


The Military Chaplains Assn. of the USA


The Retired Enlisted Assn.


USCG Chief Petty Officers Assn.


US Army Warrant Officers Assn.


Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US


Vietnam Veterans of America