



T H E M I L I T A R Y C O A L I T I O N

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Alexandria, Virginia 22314
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July 13, 2007

Senator Blanche Lincoln
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lincoln:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of uniformed services and veterans associations representing more than 5.5 million current and former servicemembers and their families and survivors, is writing to thank you for sponsoring Amendments to the Senate National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, H.R. 1585, that would inaugurate a 'total force' approach to the Montgomery GI Bill.

Your Amendments set the stage for more effective support for armed forces recruitment and greater opportunity for returning veterans of the War on Terror, including Guard and Reserve warriors.

Earlier this year, the House favorably endorsed a provision in its version of the defense authorization – Section 525, H.R. 1585 -- that authorizes the recodification of reserve educational benefits programs into Title 38. Your Amendment, SA 2072, would incorporate the same language in the Senate version. In TMC's view, this is an essential first step to synchronizing benefits to service performed for our 21st century armed forces men and women.

TMC also appreciates your leadership in championing ten-year portability of MGIB benefits earned by mobilized reservists supporting contingency operations under Chapter 1607 of 10 U.S. Code. Your Amendment, SA 2074, which was approved by unanimous consent in the Senate last year, would establish readjustment benefits for those who have sacrificed so much.

Guard and Reserve servicemembers called to active duty to defend the nation in the War on Terror are the **only group of veterans who have no access to their MGIB benefits after completing their service commitment**. Because reservists are serving on active duty more and more frequently, they are simply unable to fulfill their educational goals while in the service. To deny benefits dearly earned in service to the nation is "unconscionable" in the words of former House Military Personnel Subcommittee Chairman Vic Snyder (D-AR).

A fraction of our population – about 1% -- is defending the rest of the nation during this long, difficult and complex war. We, the protected, must do all we can to ensure all of our service men and women realize their full potential during and after their service.

The Military Coalition thanks you most sincerely for your leadership in sponsoring amendments that would realize needed Montgomery GI Bill reform.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition
(signatures enclosed)

Air Force Association
Air Force Sergeants Association
Air Force Women Officers Associated
American Logistics Association
AMVETS (American Veterans)
Army Aviation Association of America
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States
Association of the United States Army
Chief Warrant Officer and Warrant Officer Association, U.S. Coast Guard
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
Fleet Reserve Association
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
Marine Corps League
Marine Corps Reserve Association
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Association for Uniformed Services
National Guard Association of the United States
National Military Family Association
National Order of Battlefield Commissions
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Naval Reserve Association
Non Commissioned Officers Association
Reserve Enlisted Association of the United States
Reserve Officers Association
Society of Medical Consultants to the Armed Forces
The Retired Enlisted Association
United States Army Warrant Officers Association
United States Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
Veterans' Widows International Network