February 14, 2018

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senate  
302 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar,

On behalf of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States which represents the interests of over 400,000 enlisted men and women of the Army and Air National Guard, we endorse S. 673, the “Saving for Servicemembers Act”.

One weekend each month, members of the National Guard report for duty. Frequently, these men and women have to drive great distances, sometimes across state lines, to report for drill weekend. Members of the National Guard often times have to pay a high price for their commute because of high gas prices and wear and tear on their cars. Since federal employees are able to deduct from their taxes travel expenses for work-related travel of more than 50 miles, we believe Members of the National Guard should be afforded the same relief. Unfortunately, all Guardsmen and women, regardless of state, must travel at least 100 miles to take advantage of that same deduction.

Members of the National Guard are fortunate that others, like you, are taking notice of out-of-pocket expenses incurred during drill weekends. In October 2017, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report, “Reserve Component Travel: DOD Should Assess the Effect of Reservists’ Unreimbursed Out-of-Pocket Expenses on Retention”. From its report, GAO recommends, and DOD concurred, that DOD should collect and analyze data on the negative impacts of rising out-of-pocket expenses on retention. S. 673 further solidifies this effort.

Thank you for your hard work to support the Active and Reserve Components, Veterans, and family members. Our staff point of contact for this matter is Scott Bousum, Legislative Director, scott@eangus.org. EANGUS stands ready to work with you and your staff to make sure this important, timely bill is signed into law.

Sincerely,

Frank Yoakum  
Sergeant Major, US Army (retired)  
Executive Director