



## ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES

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July 18, 2017

The Honorable Phil Roe, M.D.  
Chairman  
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tim Walz  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Roe and Ranking Member Walz:

On behalf of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) which represents the interests of over 400,000 enlisted men and women of the Army and Air National Guard, we are pleased to support H.R. 3218, the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017. We want to thank you and your staffs for working with our National Office staff, and for your due diligence in crafting and considering this important piece of legislation.

As you convene to mark-up H.R. 3218, EANGUS would like to highlight numerous provisions that positively impact members of the Reserve Component. Section 101 pertaining to 12301(h) status would extend Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to Servicemembers receiving medical care for injuries sustained while on active duty. Like you, EANGUS members believe that education benefits should accrue during the recovery process. We thank you for including sections 102 and 103 which would increase funding for RC Servicemembers to align with their AC counterparts, and would allow Purple Heart recipients to receive full eligibility of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits respectively.

Thank you for addressing the negative impacts of the repealed Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) by allowing eligible members of our cohort that lost out on education benefits to transfer into the Post-9/11 GI Bill. We applaud the inclusion of Section 107 which would restore education benefits to any Servicemember negatively impacted by a school closure. Furthermore, thank you for crafting and including Section 112 to pro-rate the GI Bill housing stipend in the event an RC Servicemember is called to active duty during a semester of school.

In closing, we are particularly pleased that H.R. 3218 addresses 12304b duty status education benefits inequities. As you know, our organization worked diligently during the 114th and 115th Congresses in order to resolve this issue. If signed into law, H.R. 3218 would provide Post-9/11

GI Bill benefits to RC Servicemembers on 12304b status, just like every other status; and we thank you for making Section 401 retroactive to allow any Servicemember that deployed on 12304b orders, to date, to receive this well-deserved benefit.

EANGUS looks forward to working with you and your staffs to see this important piece of legislation signed into law. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Scott Bousum, Legislative Director at [scott@eangus.org](mailto:scott@eangus.org). Thank you again for all you do for our Servicemembers, Veterans, retirees, and family members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank Yoakum".

Frank Yoakum  
Sgt. Maj., U.S. Army (retired)  
Executive Director