Legion applauds McCain for protecting veterans’ preference

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4, 2016 — One of The American Legion’s top priorities is creating and protecting the benefits veterans use every day, including veterans’ preference for employment, which the 2017 Senate-passed National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) is threatening.

In the Senate version of the NDAA, the bill that funds the nation’s military and defense budget, is a provision that would limit veterans’ preference in hiring to a one-time use. Disappointed in the decision, The Legion sent a letter to all members of Congress voicing its opposition to a provision that seeks to undermine the institution of veterans’ preference in federal hiring.

The American Legion received a letter from Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, responding to the organization’s concerns. McCain stated in his letter, “Given your [The American Legion] and others’ concerns, I will ensure that this provision, which is not included in the House bill, is not included in the NDAA conference report.”

Research conducted by VetAdvisor and Syracuse University’s Institute for Veterans and Military Families, shows approximately two-thirds of veterans are likely to change jobs in the first two years of employment. Therefore, the provision would prevent veterans from utilizing the veterans’ preference benefit in their next job application.

“We appreciate Sen. McCain’s stalwart defense of an important benefit for all veterans who’ve served and sacrificed for their country,” said American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt. “We look forward to working with the chairman to ensure the final NDAA properly protects this earned benefit.”

The American Legion is the largest wartime veterans service organization with 2.2 million members in more than 13,000 posts in communities across in America. The Legion, established by an act of Congress in 1919, was instrumental in getting the original GI Bill through Congress and the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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