March 26, 2019

The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva
United States House of Representatives
1511 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Grijalva:

On behalf of the nearly two million members of The American Legion, I am pleased to express support for draft legislation cited as the *Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2019*. This vital legislation will enable the return of eligible veterans removed from the United States, protect veterans and servicemembers residing in the United States from removal, and facilitate naturalization through service in the Armed Forces.

According to the Department of Defense (DOD), non-citizens served in and with the United States military since the Revolutionary War. Every day, courageous men and women in our armed forces place themselves in harm's way to keep our nation safe. Many of these individuals are U.S. Citizens, but some are Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) at the time of their active duty in the Armed Forces. Although these men and women place their lives on the line, they do not automatically become naturalized U.S. Citizens.

Through The American Legion Resolution Number 15: *Expedited Citizenship Through military Service*, and Resolution Number 10: *Expedited Citizenship Applications for Deported Veterans*, The American Legion urges the United States Congress to implement measures within the Department of Defense to ensure the process of naturalization through honorable military service is completed prior to discharge. Further, The American Legion urges Congress to enact legislation to permit the granting of citizenship to deported veterans if their discharge is honorable and they do not have a felony conviction.

For the aforementioned reasons, The American Legion supports passage of this draft legislation as currently written and applauds your leadership in addressing this critical issue facing our nation's servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

For God & Country,

Brett P. Reistad
National Commander
The American Legion