The American Legion

OFFICE OF THE
NATIONAL COMMANDER

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March 11, 2015

The Honorable Patrick Murphy
U.S. House of Representatives
211 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Murphy:

On behalf of the 2.4 million members of The American Legion, I would like to express support for the *Reducing Barriers for Veterans Education Act*, which would amend Title 38 USC to include college application fees as part of the benefits provided under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program.

As affirmed in Resolution No. 312 *Ensuring the Quality of Servicemember and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Learning*, passed at the 2014 National Convention, The American Legion "support[s] any legislative or administrative proposal that improves...the GI Bill...and education benefits so servicemembers, veterans, and their families can maximize its usage."

Currently, the Post-9/11 GI Bill covers tuition and fees while providing a monthly housing stipend, a book and supply stipend, and a onetime relocation allowance. It also includes an option to transfer benefits to family members. However, application fees remain a considerable cost to those seeking to take advantage of these educational benefits.

For a veteran returning from combat overseas, these unexpected costs – which can be significant – have the potential to pose a financial burden to those planning to attend an institution of higher learning. Including application fees as part of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit would alleviate this burden, and allow veterans easier access to their earned educational benefits.

Again, The American Legion supports this legislation, and thanks you for addressing this important issue facing America's service members and veterans.

Respectfully,

Michael D. Helm

MICHAEL D. HELM
National Commander