



ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES

1 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 880 • Washington, D.C. 20001-1401 • 800-234-EANG (3264) • Fax (703) 519-3849

May 15, 2019

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
Chairman
United States Senate
412 Russell Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester
Ranking Member
United States Senate
412 Russell Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mark Takano
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
B234 Longworth Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dr. Phil Roe
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
B234 Longworth Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Isakson, Chairman Takano, Ranking Member Tester, and Ranking Member Dr. Roe,

On behalf of the members of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S. (EANGUS), which represents the interests and concerns of well over one million members of the Army and Air National Guard, their family members, Veterans, and survivors, we would like to share with you how we believe the Defense Department is misleading service members with regard their eligibility for the GI Bill. Founded in 1972, EANGUS is dedicated to the principles of providing adequate national defense and promoting the status, welfare, and professionalism of the men and women of the Army and Air National Guard by supporting legislation that provides adequate staffing, pay, benefits, entitlements, equipment, and installations for the National Guard.

We have heard anecdotal evidence that Service members who used the Montgomery GI Bill are being told they are eligible for the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill, and that they have potentially 72 months of education eligibility: 36 from the Montgomery GI Bill, and 36 from the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Furthermore, official documents presented to soldiers from Department of Defense (DoD) state the same: service members who have used their Montgomery GI Bill are being told by commanding officers and the Defense Manpower Data Center through Milconnect that they are eligible for 36 months of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, with the ability to transfer 36 months to their spouse or children. This information has led members across all branches of the military to believe that they can accumulate a total of 72 months of education benefits.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), however, states that service members can earn a maximum of 48 months of benefits without exception, and cannot honor these member's 36 months of additional eligibility promised to them by DoD. Unfortunately, this information from DoD has led many members to believe they have additional benefits, and these members planned for their families' postsecondary education with these additional benefits in mind. Now their families have enrolled in higher education only to find that VA cannot cover the cost, forcing these members to come out of retirement, take personal loans, and use personal funds if available.

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S. respectfully urges congressional leadership to author a joint letter to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Department of Veterans Affairs must correct their data systems and stop reporting false education benefits to ineligible Soldiers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank Yoakum", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Frank Yoakum
Sergeant Major
U.S. Army (Retired)
Executive Director
EANGUS

cc Members of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees