

May 26, 2020

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta  
U.S. House of Representatives  
212 Cannon Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mickie Sherill  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1208 Longworth Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Pete King  
U.S. House of Representatives  
302 Cannon Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Gerry Connolly  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2238 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susie Lee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
522 Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Conor Lamb  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1224 Longworth Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Suozzi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
214 Cannon Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dina Titus  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2464 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chris Pappas  
U.S. House of Representatives  
323 Canon Office Building

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2136 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Stephen Lynch  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2109 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable TJ Cox  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1728 Longworth Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bill Foster  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2366 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim McGovern  
U.S. House of Representatives  
408 Cannon Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerry Nadler  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2132 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dan Kildee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
203 Canon Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Costa  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2081 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester  
U.S. House of Representatives

1519 Longworth Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bonnie Watson Coleman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2442 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Terri Sewell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2201 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lou Correa  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1039 Longworth Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Panetta, Representative Sherrill, Representative King, Representative Connolly, Representative Lee, Representative Lamb, Representative Suozzi, Representative Titus, Representative Norton, Representative Lynch, Representative Cox, Representative Foster, Representative McGovern, Representative Nadler, Representative Kildee, Representative Costa, Representative Pappas, Representative Rochester, Representative Coleman, Representative Correa and Representative Sewell,

On behalf of the members of the Veterans Education Project (VEP), which represents the interests and concerns of well over one million members of the Army and Air National Guard, their family members, National Guard retirees, and survivors, we are pleased to offer our support for the *National Guard Covid-19 Earned Benefits Guarantee Act*.

In the midst of the unprecedented national crisis brought upon by Covid-19, members of the National Guard have diligently shown their great worth and dedication to people of this nation. Over 40,000 National Guard servicemembers have been activated on title 32 § 502(f) orders as early as March, performing critical service to assist overwhelmed health care infrastructures by building new testing centers, testing civilians, sanitizing facilities, and providing humanitarian aid to Americans in need. It is evident that without the aid of these troops many states would not have had the resources available to respond to this crisis efficiently, and an untold number of American lives have been saved by these servicemembers coming to their communities' aid.

And yet, it seems with clear foresight that these servicemembers' orders have been cut to 89 days—*one* day short of the required threshold of eligibility— in order to deny them access to any federal benefits for serving on the front lines of this pandemic. As states have called out for continued aid from the National Guard, whose orders were to end at the end of May, their orders were extended for a peculiar 24 days, ending in the middle of the week, with no clear reason other than to deny them eligibility for education benefits and retirement.

On behalf of our membership, the Veterans Education Project thanks all of you for your service and commitment to the servicemembers and veterans of the National Guard. The *National Guard Covid-19 Earned Benefits Guarantee Act* is a landmark piece of legislation that makes great strides in ensuring our members receive not only the benefits but honor they deserve. We look forward to working with you and your staff to advance this important piece of legislation.



Daniel Elkins  
19<sup>th</sup> SFG  
Army National Guard  
Executive Director  
Veterans Education Project