

The Honorable Louis Frankel
U.S. House of Representatives
2305 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael Waltz
U.S. House of Representatives
213 Cannon Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 11, 2021

Representative Frankel and Representative Waltz,

On behalf of the Veterans Education Project (VEP), we thank your offices for the introduction of the *Veteran Education Empowerment Act*. As veterans serving veterans, the Veterans Education Project is committed to nonpartisan research, engagement, and policy implementation in our efforts to support institutions that meet the needs of student veterans, and guarantee the benefits and support systems necessary for veteran and military students to succeed.

The Veterans Education Project has long advocated for the authorization of Title VIII funding for purpose of the establishment and longevity of Student Veteran Centers in American institutions of higher education. Far too often, crucial resources and information are scattered between various administrative offices that remain disparate and inaccessible. Veteran students already face significant barriers to success as they pursue post-secondary education—they are often older with families and demanding fiscal obligations—that tend to diminish enrollment and weigh down persistence.

In this battle of attrition, Veteran students deserve a welcoming and informative space at their post-secondary institution of choice in which comradery, mentorship, networking, scheduling, financial aid, Veterans benefits, and tutoring are available for their benefit. The *Veteran Education Empowerment Act* would appropriate the funds necessary to establish these crucial Veteran Student Centers via Title VIII grants and is a great step toward creating veteran and military spaces within American higher education.

On behalf of our members, we thank you for this important piece of legislation and look forward to working with your offices moving forward to see its passage.

Donald Franklin
Donald Franklin
Legislative Director
Veterans Education Project