

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 26, 2018

The Honorable Jim Mattis
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Mattis,

As Members of the House of Representatives committed to ensuring that our government honors its promises to our military personnel and to our veterans, we write to you in strong opposition to the July 12 revision of Department of Defense Instruction 1341.13, which would prevent service members with greater than 16 years of credible service from transferring their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to eligible family members.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill, passed a decade ago, built on a 64-year legacy of American commitment to our veterans that their government will provide to them an education and greater opportunity in recognition of their sacrifice in a time of war. These educational opportunities have changed the social and economic fabric of the United States. On behalf of a grateful nation, it is our collective duty and responsibility to uphold the hard-earned benefits of our nation's active-duty service members and veterans, and to remain faithful stewards of the GI Bill's educational assistance program.

Revoking transferability benefits breaks this commitment with our most dedicated and seasoned service members. As the Global War on Terror continues, and revisionist competitors seek to challenge the United States in new domains, it remains critically important to attract and retain the best-qualified individuals for military service. Eliminating the ability to transfer Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to family members after honorably completing 16 years of service sends exactly the wrong message to those who have chosen the military as their long-term career, and sets a dangerous precedent for the removal of other critical benefits as members approach military retirement. Educational benefits should be maintained after proving oneself through years of devoted and continuing military service – not removed after the 16-year mark.

Once a service member meets the requirements for transferring Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to an eligible family member, we must uphold our end of the commitment. This change in policy is unacceptable, and we call upon you to swiftly reverse this decision.

Sincerely,



JOE COURTNEY
Member of Congress



TIMOTHY J. WALZ
Member of Congress



JACKIE SPEIER
Member of Congress



DINA TITUS
Member of Congress



PAUL TONKO
Member of Congress



BRIAN HIGGINS
Member of Congress



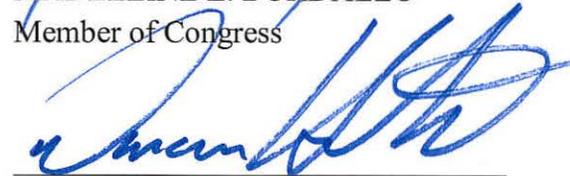
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C. A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER
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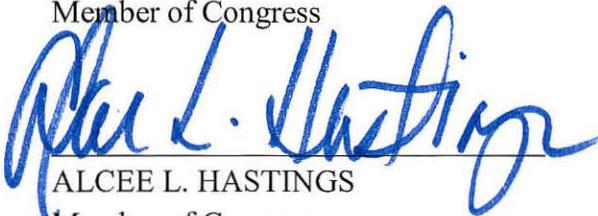
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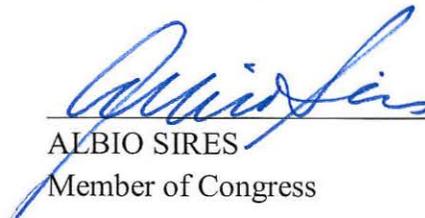
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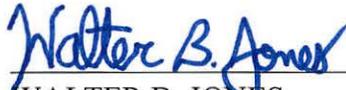
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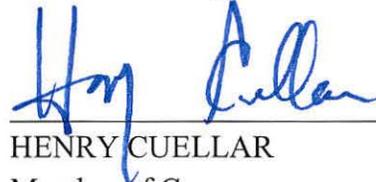
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HENRY CUELLAR
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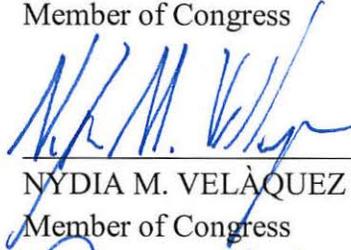
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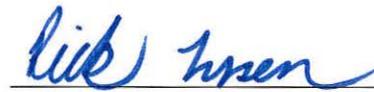
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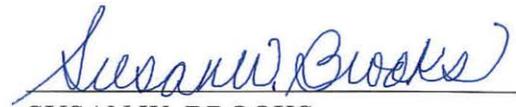
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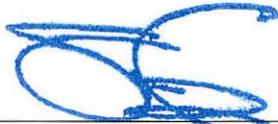
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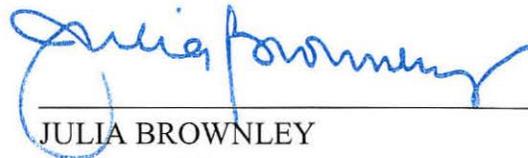
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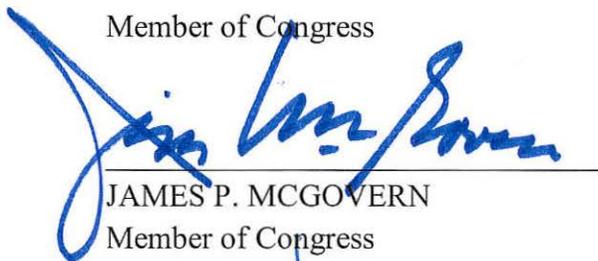
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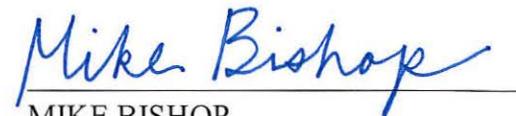
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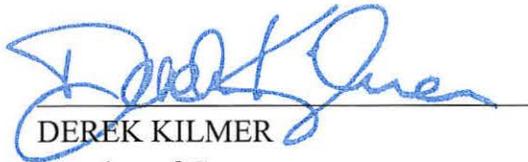
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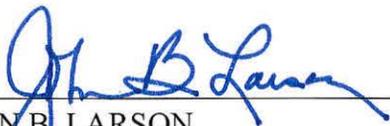
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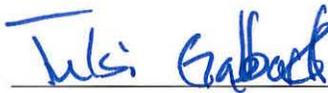
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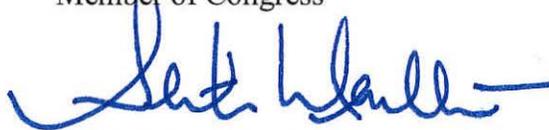
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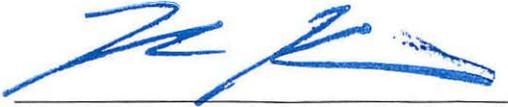
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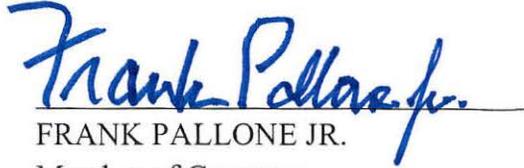
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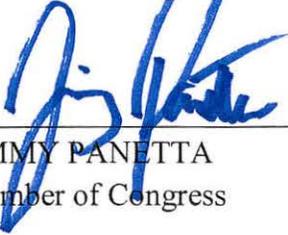
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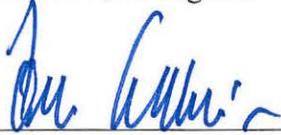
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Elizabeth H. Esty

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