OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(MILITARY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY POLICY)
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DoD-State Liaison Office

EXHIBIT NO. 1
DATE 3-8-13
SUB. NO. HB317

8 February, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hunter
Montana State House
State Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Dear Representative Hunter:

I am writing to you in regards to your hearing on HB317, concerning acceptance of applicable military training and experience toward academic credit. I will not be available to attend the hearing and wish to submit the following as testimony describing the importance of this issue to the military community.

I'm Jacline Harriman Department of Defense Regional State Liaison for the Western region, working for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy and I am a combat veteran. My office partners with states on 10 quality of life issues affecting military families. Our top priority issue this year is facilitating Service members receiving credit for military education, training, and experience when applying for a state license and/or academic credit.

The American Council on Education (ACE) has established college credit recommendations for these learning experiences, which are published in the *ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*. This document provides the mechanism, but not a requirement, for academic institutions to accept military training and experience. States can establish requirements, for academic institutions to assess, and grant where appropriate, credit for education, training and experience gained in the military towards degree and certificate requirements.

The Department of Defense recognizes that if we are going to ask credentialing bodies to evaluate military training and experience, we have to make it easier for them to do so, minimizing any fiscal impact. There are six states (CO, IL, MD, NY, VA, WA) partnering with the Department of Defense (DoD) to address this hurdle.

- First, there are currently different Service transcripts that record the training, experience, and education received by Service members. DoD has worked with the Services and with credentialing organizations to develop better standardize transcript and make it more understandable to non-military audiences. This document is called the Joint Service Transcript (JST) and will be launched this spring.
- Second, since some credentials require an individual to have completed an approved or accredited training program, we are determining which credentials related to military occupations require training program approval or accreditation and identify methods of facilitating this.
- Finally, a key aspect of providing accrediting and credentialing agencies the ability to assess military training is making the training programs of instruction (POIs) available to them for review. Currently, the Services each have their own policies and procedures related to development and maintenance of POIs and there is no centralized location for agencies to access them. Ensuring POIs have some degree of standardization and are more easily accessible to accrediting and credentialing agencies and educational institutions will make it easier for them to assess whether the military training courses meet their criteria.

It is important to us that you know we are not asking for direct credit if it is not equivalent. We only seek credit where credit is due. Another point to consider: You and I have already paid for this veteran's training, within the DoD schools and years of experience while serving our Nation, with our federal tax dollars.

The best way to assist in the successful reintegration of a SM is to ensure he or she quickly finds meaningful employment or becomes immersed in an academic regime leading to future employment

Sincerely,

Jacline L. Harriman
Western Region State Liaison

Improving the Lives of Military Members and their Families