



## T H E M I L I T A R Y C O A L I T I O N

201 North Washington Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
(703) 838-8113

July 16, 2008

The Honorable Daniel K. Akaka  
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
412 Senate Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-6375

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of nationally prominent military and veterans organizations, representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members and their families and survivors writes to thank you for your support of the New GI Bill, a truly historic legislative achievement that recognizes the service and sacrifice of this generation of uniformed service members and veterans.

TMC urgently requests your help to fix what we believe was an inadvertent technical error in the law — to ensure that members of the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Corps of Commissioned Officers (NOAA Corps) who have served on active duty since September 10, 2001 are entitled to the New GI Bill.

USPHS and NOAA Corps officers have served in every major armed conflict since their establishment. They have been eligible for all other GI bill programs over the last 60 years.

Historically, active-duty USPHS and NOAA Corps officers are included in statute as "veterans" under Title 42 USC §213(d) and Title 38 USC §101(21)(B) and (C). Unfortunately, the language of the New GI Bill refers to another subsection of law that restricts the term "active duty" for the purposes of the law only to members of the Armed Forces.

TMC recognizes that technical corrections should be as close to budget-neutral as possible. The additional cost of covering USPHS and NOAA Corps officers (an active-duty service of only 6,000) and the NOAA Corps (some 300 officers) would be virtually negligible, relative to the more than 1.5 million servicemembers eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Over the years, your Committee has been extremely supportive of the USPHS and NOAA Commissioned Corps, and we are most grateful.

The Military Coalition strongly recommends a technical correction of the provisions of the New GI Bill to authorize eligibility for the USPHS and NOAA Commissioned Corps.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition  
(signatures enclosed)

cc: Members, Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs

Michael M. D...  
Air Force Association

Patricia M. Humphrey  
Air Force Women Officers  
Associated

Donald P. Fisher  
American Logistics Association

James K. ...  
Army Aviation Assn. of America

George K. ...  
Assn. of Military Surgeons  
of the United States

Herman B. Lopez  
Assn. of the US Army

SM A ...  
Commissioned Officers Assn. of  
the US Public Health Service, Inc

Charles P. ...  
CWO & WO Assn. US Coast Guard

Michael P. ...  
Enlisted Association of the  
National Guard of the US

John ...  
Fleet Reserve Assn.

Martha M. ...  
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.

...  
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans  
of America

...  
Jewish War Veterans of the USA

...  
Marine Corps League

...  
Marine Corps Reserve Association

...  
Military Officers Assn. of America

Henry J. Cook  
Military Order of the Purple Heart

...  
National Association for  
Uniformed Services

Stephen M. Koper  
National Guard Assn. of the US

Nancy ...  
National Military Family Assn.

Gilbert H. ...  
National Order of  
Battlefield Commissions

...  
Naval Enlisted Reserve Assn.

...  
Naval Reserve Association

J. Michael ...  
Navy League of the US

Gene ...  
Non Commissioned Officers Assn.  
of the United States of America

...  
Reserve Enlisted Assn. of the US

...  
Reserve Officers Assn.

...  
Society of Medical Consultants  
to the Armed Forces

...  
The Military Chaplains Assn. of the USA

...  
The Retired Enlisted Assn.

J. P. ...  
USCG Chief Petty Officers Assn.

...  
US Army Warrant Officers Assn.