

The Honorable George Miller  
Chairman  
House Committee on Education and Labor  
2182 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

July 29, 2008

Dear Chairman Miller:

I write today on behalf of Student Veterans of America (SVA), a coalition of over 75 student veterans organizations on campuses across America. SVA is in full support of the inclusion of Section 883 of H.R. 4137, The College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2008, in the final legislation.

Since 2001, approximately 1.6 million service members have been deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Over 32,000 of these individuals have been physically wounded and many more are returning with mental health wounds including post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) directly related to their deployments. One way our returning service members can readjust back into the civilian society is through obtaining an education.

We know over 520,000 veterans are currently using their educational benefits at various institutions across the country. With the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act (the 21<sup>st</sup> century GI Bill) signed into law on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008 we can only expect those numbers to increase. These veterans entering institutions of higher education need resources to help them succeed in their transition from service member to civilian. The establishment of "Centers of Excellence for Veteran Students" will not only help current student veterans stay in school, but will also attract prospective veterans who wish to use their educational benefits.

Student Veterans of America wishes to fully endorse Section 883. Veterans across the country will greatly benefit from veterans resource centers on campus. This bill will help currently enrolled veterans, as well as ensure institutions of higher education will be prepared for an influx of student veterans after the new GI bill takes effect. This is truly the next step in ensuring that veterans succeed in higher education.

Thank you for your support of this legislation.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth O'Herrin  
Executive Director  
Student Veterans of America  
[www.studentveterans.org](http://www.studentveterans.org)  
PO Box 77673  
Washington, DC 20013  
(202) 939-9702

