

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO UTILIZE THE NEW MEXICO STATE APPROVING AGENCY AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE APPROVING AGENCIES WHEN LEGISLATION IS BEING CONSIDERED BY CONGRESS THAT COULD IMPACT EDUCATION BENEFITS FOR NEW MEXICO VETERANS.

WHEREAS, congress, in its wisdom, determined that each state should create a state approving agency to approve educational programs for veterans and to determine which programs were appropriate for veterans to utilize United States department of veterans affairs education benefits; and

WHEREAS, the first state approving agencies were formed after World War II; and

WHEREAS, the primary role of a state approving agency is to review, evaluate and approve quality programs of education and training under state and federal criteria so that veterans may use the GI Bill or other veteran-related education benefits; and

WHEREAS, this fundamental role of a state approving agency has remained the same; however, state approving agencies have grown with the changes in society over the past fifty years. State approving agencies have become advocates for quality education and training for veterans and other eligible persons; educational partners with the institutions

themselves, facilitating even greater and more diverse educational opportunities for veterans; and strong advocates for the usage of the GI Bill; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico state approving agency is a division of the veterans' services department; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico state approving agency approves programs of education and training at institutions of higher learning, non-degree institutions, apprenticeship programs and other on-the-job training programs; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has approved over two hundred twenty-seven facilities for veteran-related education benefits; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2011, New Mexico had six thousand six hundred fifty-seven persons receiving veteran-related education benefits at one hundred twenty-five active facilities; and

WHEREAS, state approving agencies conduct on-site compliance visits at approved institutions and schools; provide technical assistance to all interested parties; are engaged in outreach activities to foster the usage of the GI Bill; and act as state liaisons in assisting military installations to provide base personnel with quality educational offerings; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico state approving agency is a member of the national association of state approving

agencies, which works in cooperation with its partners to facilitate the efforts of the state approving agencies to promote and safeguard quality educational and training programs for all veterans and other eligible persons to ensure greater educational and training opportunities that meet the changing needs of veterans; and

WHEREAS, state approving agencies have developed a working partnership with the federal government that other federal agencies have tried to emulate; and

WHEREAS, every year, congress discusses and enacts legislation impacting veteran-related education benefits; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico state approving agency is the only state government entity that works directly with schools and veterans regarding veteran-related education benefits and that can provide invaluable information to the New Mexico congressional delegation on issues regarding these benefits; and

WHEREAS, to ensure quality educational and training programs for veterans and other eligible persons, it is important for congress to utilize the expertise of the New Mexico state approving agency and the national association of state approving agencies when contemplating legislation that could impact veteran-related education benefits;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional

delegation be requested to utilize the New Mexico state approving agency and the national association of state approving agencies when legislation is being considered by congress that could impact education benefits for New Mexico veterans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to members of the New Mexico congressional delegation, the secretary of the United States department of veterans affairs, the president of the national association of state directors of veterans affairs, the national association of state approving agencies and the veterans' services department.