

The American Legion

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OFFICE OF THE
NATIONAL COMMANDER

August 3, 2011

Honorable Jeff Miller, Chair
House Veterans' Affairs Committee
335 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Miller:

On behalf of the 2.4 million members of The American Legion, I express our full support for H.R. 2433, the *Veterans Opportunity to Work Act of 2011* or VOW Act, which makes improvements relating to veterans employment and training.

The Department of Labor reported in June that 1 million veterans were unemployed, and of that million, over 632,000 are between the ages of 35 and 64. Our membership includes working age veterans of the Vietnam and Persian Gulf War eras, as well as, of the conflicts of Iraq and Afghanistan. We are acutely concerned with the unemployment of all veterans.

Veterans separating now from the military may go to school on the Post 9/11 GI Bill; however, veterans of prior conflicts have no similar opportunity. Consequently, we applaud your efforts with this bill to provide a time-limited educational benefit to unemployed veterans aged 35 to 60 at community colleges and technical training schools. These institutions should provide enrolled veterans with the training and skills necessary to compete in the today's economy. We also support the other provisions that will improve the Transition Assistance Program and will ease regulatory impediments to licensing and certification. The American Legion believes this bill will improve the employment outlook for all veterans that participate in these programs.

The American Legion welcomes your efforts to provide training assistance to veterans and reduce their unacceptably high unemployment and we stand ready to assist you in the passage of this vital legislation. Thank you for your support of America's veterans and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jimmie L. Foster".

JIMMIE L. FOSTER
National Commander