

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CREATION OF A GI**
2 **BILL FOR THE UTAH NATIONAL GUARD**

3 2015 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Karen Mayne**

6 House Sponsor: Val L. Peterson

8 **LONG TITLE**

9 **General Description:**

10 This resolution strongly urges the Utah Legislature to recognize the valuable
11 contribution that service members and veterans make in the nation's defense and to
12 support the creation of a Utah GI Bill.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14 This resolution:

- 15 ▶ urges the Utah Legislature and Utah's federally elected delegation to recognize the
16 valuable contributions by United States service members and veterans; and
- 17 ▶ strongly urges those elected officials to enact laws to provide for state and federally
18 supported educational programs for eligible service members and veterans who are
19 residents of the state.

20 **Special Clauses:**

21 None

23 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

24 WHEREAS, one of the most basic services a person can provide to the person's country
25 is that of serving in the defense of that country;

26 WHEREAS, volunteering to serve in the armed forces requires sacrifices by the
27 individual and the individual's family up to and including one's life;

28 WHEREAS, being deployed by state or federal command substantially interrupts a
29 service member's life and that of the service member's family;

30 WHEREAS, both educational and employment opportunities are deferred or lost when
31 a service member is deployed, especially to a combat zone;

32 WHEREAS, service members, whether active duty, reserve, or National Guard, have
33 been activated and deployed from Utah to numerous combat zones for extended or multiple
34 tours of duty;

35 WHEREAS, service members upon returning from overseas deployment, including
36 combat zones, must be reintegrated into society as veterans;

37 WHEREAS, reintegration into society includes rebuilding family ties, re-establishing
38 employment or finding new employment, and re-starting or pursuing additional education;

39 WHEREAS, the United States Montgomery GI Bill pays a maximum monthly amount
40 for 36 academic months that is inadequate to cover the cost of college and living expenses,
41 especially if the recipient has a family;

42 WHEREAS, the original United States GI Bill following WWII was adequate to cover
43 the cost of college and living expenses at the time, but has not kept pace with rising costs over
44 the years;

45 WHEREAS, the Selective Service ended the draft in 1973 and the all volunteer
46 military was created;

47 WHEREAS, the armed forces currently have few incentives available to attract
48 volunteers to replace service members who leave before retirement;

49 WHEREAS, many members of the volunteer armed forces were recruited with the
50 promise of adequate GI Bill benefits to pay for education;

51 WHEREAS, the current Montgomery GI Bill and related state programs are all based
52 upon earning a bachelor's degree in 36 academic months;

53 WHEREAS, most recipients do not earn a bachelor's degree in 36 academic months;
54 and

55 WHEREAS, recipients must work part or full time to support their families and cover
56 living expenses while attending institutions of higher education:

57 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah

58 strongly urges the federal government to recognize that service members need additional GI
59 Bill support in order to achieve their goals of a college education and related employment.

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah strongly urges
61 the leaders of the United States in the legislative and executive branches of government to
62 partner with the states in funding state GI Bill programs that will allow a recipient to finish the
63 recipient's college education with as little disruption as possible.

64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
65 urges the Veterans' and Military Affairs Commission and the State Board of Regents to study
66 the issue of viable funding for service members and veterans eligible for educational benefits to
67 complete a college education.

68 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah calls on Senator
69 Orrin Hatch, Senator Mike Lee, Representative Rob Bishop, Representative Jason Chaffetz,
70 Representative Chris Stewart, and Representative Mia Love to sponsor or cosponsor legislation
71 in Congress to partner with the states in supporting a state GI Bill.

72 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of
73 the United States, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United
74 States House of Representatives, and Utah's congressional delegation.