April 5, 2018

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chair, Education and Workforce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Scott
Ranking Member, Education and Workforce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chair, Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member, Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Foxx and Thornberry and Ranking Members Scott and Smith:

The Military Coalition, a consortium of uniformed services and veterans associations representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members and their families and survivors, writes to express our opposition to H.R. 5199, The Education Savings Accounts for Military Families Act. This legislation would divert funding from Impact Aid in order to provide a voucher for military-connected students to attend schools in selected school districts.

The vast majority of the Nation’s nearly 600,000 school-age military children attend public schools in their local civilian communities. Impact Aid is a vital revenue source for many of the schools serving military families, helping to offset lost property tax revenue when a district includes nontaxable federal land such as a military installation. Using Impact Aid dollars to fund Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) for military-connected students would be financially devastating for many school districts, critically compromising the quality of the education they could provide to military children and their civilian classmates.

Additionally, we note that relatively few military families would be eligible for an ESA under the legislation – and among those that would be eligible, the majority would receive ESA’s of only $2500. No children of service members in the National Guard or Reserves would be eligible. It is counterproductive to defund Impact Aid, a successful program that has long enjoyed bipartisan support, in order to provide a benefit of questionable value to a minority of military students.

Military families place a high value on the quality of their children’s education. We urge you not to reduce funding to a program critical to ensuring military children receive the best possible education.

Sincerely,
The Military Coalition
(Signatures enclosed)
Air Force Association

Air Force Sergeants Association

EGF Sinclair
Army Aviation Association of America

AMSUS, the Society of Federal Health Professionals

William F. Coterl
Association of the United States Army

Bernie L. Reynolds
Association of the United States Navy

James T. Clurie
Commissioned Officers Assn. of the US Public Health Service, Inc

Carol Setteducato
CWOA, US Coast Guard


del Barbara
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the US

William Nee
Fleet Reserve Association

Vernon Boudin
Gold Star Wives of America


del Barbara
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America


del Barbara
Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Marine Corps League

Dana T. Atkins
Military Officers Association of America

Geige van Everen
Military Order of the Purple Heart

Cyril W. Wagen
National Military Family Association

William F. Coterl
Naval Enlisted Reserve Assn.

Mary M. Haggerty
Non Commissioned Officers Assn. of the United States of America

Sally B. Winton
Service Women's Action Network

Gregory F. Beachem
The Military Chaplains Assn. of the USA

Sandra L. Hallman
The Retired Enlisted Assn.

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors

Eugene A. Reid
USCG Chief Petty Officers Assn.

Robert A. Berkel
US Army Warrant Officers Assn.

Randy Bordeuf
Wounded Warrior Project