

Subj: **Press Release: The American Legion urges Congress to pass Post 9/11 Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Legion urges Congress to pass Post 9/11 Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act

WASHINGTON (October 30, 2009) -- The American Legion has delivered letters of appreciation to four members of Congress for introducing bills that would improve the Troops to Teachers program, which is designed to make it easier for military veterans to transition into careers as educators.

“Since 1999, The American Legion continues to support the concept of offering incentives and assistance to former U.S. service members seeking certification and employment as educators,” National Commander Clarence E. Hill wrote in letters to Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz.; Sen. Michael Bennet, D-Colo.; Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn.; and Rep. Tom Petri, R-Wis. “We are pleased your bill seeks to make the Troops to Teachers program more accessible to a greater number of veterans and more school districts...Clearly, Troops to Teachers meets the needs of local schools and is an excellent employment opportunity for recently separated service members.”

The bills, H.R. 3943 and S. 1932, would expand the Troops to Teachers program pool of eligible participants by reducing length of service requirements. The Post 9/11 Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act would also expand the number of school districts in which participants can qualify for a stipend toward the cost of becoming a teacher. Moreover, the Act would create an advisory board charged with improving awareness of the program, increasing participation and ensuring that the program meets the needs of schools and veterans.

The current Troops to Teachers program was implemented in 1994. William Owings, a professor who has studied the program, told *Time Magazine*, “Principals and other supervisors have reported that these teachers worked better with problem children, worked better with

parents and worked better with colleagues. He added that administrators have observed that “the TTT people rated higher in exhibiting behaviors that are associated with increases in student achievement.”

In his letters to the sponsoring lawmakers, Hill expressed his support. “The American Legion salutes you for your leadership on this important matter and stands with you in support. The Post 9/11 Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act not only assists veterans in transitioning to a new career as educators, but also provides excellent role models for the youth of this nation.”

With 2.5 million members, The American Legion is the nation’s largest veterans service organization. The Legion works hand-in-hand with members of Congress, leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs and other key stakeholders to assure appropriate funding and policy making on measures and issues affecting the military’s active duty, National Guard and Reserve personnel, veterans, and their families.

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