

201 North Washington Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

March 13, 2018

The Honorable Tim Kaine The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand

United States Senate United States Senate

Washington, DC 20150 Washington, DC 20150

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren The Honorable David Perdue

United States Senate United States Senate

Washington, DC 20150 Washington, DC 20150

The Honorable Elise Stefanik The Honorable A. Donald McEachin

United States House of Representatives United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Kaine, Gillibrand, Warren, Perdue and Representatives Stefanik and McEachin,

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 support for S. 2379 and H.R. 5125, *The Military Spouse Employment Act of 2018*. This legislation proposes government-wide improvements and increased study of factors affecting military spouse unemployment and underemployment.

It is often said that while the military recruits a service member, it must retain a family. In order to maintain the all-volunteer force, Congress and the Department of Defense must work to mitigate the stresses associated with the military lifestyle and make military service a viable choice for today’s service members and their families. Among the most pressing challenges is persistent unemployment of military spouses, which some surveys place as high as 25-28 percent. Frequent military-ordered moves coupled with lack of access to affordable child care make it difficult for spouses to find jobs and pursue careers, placing many military families under great financial pressure and limited opportunities for self-actualization. Allowing the status quo to continue ignores the importance military spouses put on maintaining a career of their own in an era when two-income households are a fact of life.

We appreciate that the *Military Spouse Employment Act of 2018* takes a multifaceted approach to solving the problem, including childcare access and opportunities for public-private partnerships. Thank you for introducing this important legislation which will greatly contribute to the quality of life of service members and their families.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition