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June 25, 2008

The Honorable Daniel K. Akaka
Chairman
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20210

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Mr. Chairman and Mr. Ranking Member:

We write on behalf of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities representing more than 450 presidents and chancellors of public four-year institutions of higher education to comment on S. 1315, which will be offered as an amendment to S. 3023, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2009 during the markup of this legislation.

AASCU strongly supports the importance of institutions of higher education to assist service personnel returning from redeployment to continue their postsecondary education.

Section 306 of S. 1315 would provide relief for students who discontinue postsecondary education because of military service. AASCU has a long history of urging colleges and universities to provide full refund of tuition and other institutional charges and encouraging flexible re-enrollment options for affected students. We support the goal of provisions of this amendment regarding refund of tuition of fees for service members called to military service, and re-enrollment of service personnel called to military service.

We offer our assistance in working with you as this important bill moves forward in an effort to provide well-deserved benefits for those service members who seek to reenter and resume their academic pursuits in our institutions of higher education.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Elmendorf