

MEMORANDUM FOR CONSIDERATION

TO: Public-At-Large

FROM: Paul Evans

DATE: 19 October 2010

Re: Proposals for Consideration: Military, Veterans', and War-fighting Policies

The following proposals are offered for widespread dissemination and popular consideration:

Military

1. Passage of federal legislation that mandates all post-secondary education/training delivery facilities to recognize and accept military training coursework as appropriate substitutes; establishment of a standing commission (comprised of DoD, DoEd, and VA - along with citizen members) empowered to simplify and standardize credit/s.

Note: all/any institution accepting federal funds (all/any kinds) would be required to implement and sustain commission standards; failure would result in loss of federal funds.

2. Passage of federal legislation that makes an honorable discharge from all/any military component an appropriate alternative to the naturalization process; DD214 with an honorable discharge equals citizenship (and documentation thereof).

Note: military education/training is accomplished in English; formal documents, personnel records, and unit awards/recognition require at least a baseline mastery of language as well as heritage/history of the United States of America. Rather than a "free pass," this proposal merely formally recognizes that skill-sets required for honorable service within the Armed Forces of the United States (and is supplement to recognition of education/training provided to service members at civilian education/training facilities - Proposal 1 - above).

3. Passage of federal legislation that secures partial military pension for military members that "honorably" serve in excess of 36 months in hostile fire conditions (within a 100 month period), regardless of duration of military service.

Note: military members that spend 36 of 100 months deployed to hostile fire zones may not be able to complete a full, traditional military "career." In simplest terms, troops pushed too fast, too hard can and will break. It is the best interest of the troops, the services, and the United States to provide a moderately subsidized alternative for these military members.

4. Passage of federal legislation that amends existing National Guard/Reserve retirement protocols: it is in the best interest of the troops, the services, and the United States to provide full retirement benefits at age 55. Few active duty troops serve until age 55; the increasing demands of an expeditionary military require a pool of healthy troops as well as a sustainable force management structure.

Note: military members with at least 20 years of "creditable service" should be allowed to retire at age 55. Troops seeking service beyond 55 should be allowed to continue (as long as they meet service requirements), but too many currently serve until 60 because they have no alternative because of financial need. Retirement from the active duty yields automatic pension ; there is no responsible argument for making troops that served honorably wait until age 60 (if they have met the requirements for retirement).

Veterans'

1. Passage of coordinated federal/state legislation amending the federal/state veterans' home loan programming to allow for refinancing of mortgage/s. Limits would be established based upon duration of military service (minimum of 1, maximum of 3 per veteran). This would expand the capacity of federal/state veterans' programs to secure housing for aging and/or "in crisis" veterans thereby mitigating and potentially stabilizing an aspect of homelessness among veterans.
2. Passage of a percentage (added) rural differential for health and/or rehabilitative services reimbursements for veterans'. VA-wide formularies that off-set structural costs of accessing a benefits/health care system focused largely within population centers across the nation. This differential should be utilized as a "standard" throughout the Veterans' complex so that planning and execution strategies consider the "real cost" of internal versus external programming.
3. Passage of federal/state funding for Veterans' Service Officer placement on all/any community college and public university. Inherent to the "public mission" of public institutions is the community as a whole that it serves (as well as the nation that allows it to exist).

Note: Oregon has demonstrable proof of success from initial steps taken to secure the campus VSO concept: funding is tight, and the need for "on the ground" assistance for military families has never been greater (at least since 2001). This should be a major

priority - a low cost, high return proposal that will "buy down" long term costs for veterans' benefits/health care because of earlier intervention and treatment.

4. Passage of federal/state recommendations submitted to the Oregon Legislature and the Oregon Congressional Delegation by the Oregon Task Force on Veterans' Reintegration; the Oregon Task Force on Veterans' Transportation; and the Oregon Task Force on Women Veterans' Health. These recommendations will be refined throughout the summer/fall of 2010.

Warfighting

1. Passage of federal/state legislation that establishes priorities for US companies for products directly associated with warfighting requirement/s. All/any contracted services would be reviewed under existing DoD and NGB protocols with an additional pre-decision step: companies with proven US status would receive priority over any/all others.

Note: this does not impact products (planes, ships, trucks), but services - individual contracted services that support warfighter requirement/s. Existing trade practices require a very careful approach on implementation. However, for services directly related to the effectiveness, health, and safety of individual troops - the US maintains the right to ensure security of services provided to men/women in Harm's Way.

2. Passage of federal legislation that criminalizes bad faith/bad outcome practices among contractors providing products and services for warfighter requirement/s. This legislation would hold senior corporate decision-makers liable for grievous acts; it would assess a 10% fine (on top of other penalties) for impact upon troops.

Note: all/any receipts for the 10% "Protecting our Troops" fines, would be transferred to VA medical research account/s. These funds would help support treatment development for many of the ailments and harms impacted upon troops (possibly by the very same corporate malfeasance).

3. Passage of federal/state legislation that criminalizes "Abuse/Mistreatment of Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve military personnel." This legislation (federal for active duty/reserves; state for militia) would establish criminal penalties for willful abuse of military equipment and/or troops.

Note: political decisions made by citizens George Bush and Richard Cheney to send ill-equipped troops into hostile fire would potentially qualify for prosecution. Criminal behavior would include (but not be limited to) knowingly falsifying official documents, ignoring critical evidence related to placement of troops in/near untenable regions, as well as lacking health care and treatment for returned veterans'.

4. Passage of federal/state legislation restricting the deployment of "surviving siblings" to hostile fire zones; waivers for service within a recognized hostile fire zone would require at least the following: a) origin by individual member; b) concurrence of unit commander; c) concurrence of a flag officer; and d) concurrence of President (for active duty/reservists), or the Governor (for National Guard).

Note: there is a common misperception that the services learned the lesson of the "Sullivan Tragedy." This is not the case. Surviving siblings can request (and are often granted) an exemption for deployment to a hostile fire zone, but it must be asked and advocated for "up the chain." Most military members would not willingly "pull" themselves from a deployment (especially in front of their peers). However, if the process were reversed, where the surviving sibling had to fight to deploy - the process itself would ensure fewer instances of potential multiple losses for military families.