

December 16, 2010

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) has succeeded in his effort to ensure that National Guardsmen receive the full education benefits that they have earned. Earlier this year, Congressman Altmire introduced the National Guard Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, legislation that would help approximately 130,000 National Guardsmen qualify for the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill's benefits by ensuring that they receive credit for their Title 32 active duty service. Congressman Altmire's bill passed the House today as part of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act (S. 3447) and is now set to be signed into law.

“As a result of this legislation, National Guardsmen who have helped to protect our citizens here at home will now be able to qualify for the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill’s benefits,” Congressman Altmire said. “America’s National Guardsmen provide invaluable service to our country during times of crisis. It is only right that they too should benefit from the largest expansion of veterans’ education benefits since World War II.”

To qualify for the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill's benefits, veterans must have completed at least 90 days of active-duty service since September 11, 2001. As it is currently written, the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill only takes into account the time National Guardsmen have spent on Title 10 active duty service – which involves supporting or fighting alongside troops overseas – when calculating their education benefits. Under Congressman Altmire's legislation, National Guardsmen will also be able to use their more domestically-focused Title 32 active duty service – which includes homeland security, troop support and training, disaster relief, and other key missions – to qualify for the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill's benefits. As a result of this change, approximately 130,000 National Guardsmen will be able to qualify for the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill for the first time.

Under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, qualifying veterans can receive a maximum education benefit equal to the cost of in-state tuition at their state's most expensive public university, plus a cost of living stipend. Veterans can also receive an additional \$1,000 to offset the cost of books and other educational expenses. Veterans who do not wish to use their benefits for themselves can give them to their children.