

Melinda Swagger

From: Jody Ogle <jodywogle@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2025 8:49 AM
To: House Education; House Higher Education; House Finance Committee
Subject: Request for support to HB 2610

Dear respected Delegates,

I am writing to request your support for HB 2610 which grants a tuition waiver for disabled veterans of more than 50% and their dependents. West Virginia ranks among the top nationally in terms of veterans per capita. I am one of those veterans, as are my father (deceased), two brothers, one sister, seven aunts and uncles and many other members of my extended family. As a third generation veteran, military service was and remains my family's business, and I'm proud of the principles of patriotism that were instilled in me. I'm now retired. Unfortunately, I am one of those veterans who have endured injuries during my 27+ years of service that rendered me more than 50% disabled. While I am in an economic position that enables me to send my children to college, many disabled veterans are not. As a youth that was my reality. I was raised by a single mother who barely made ends meet. My father had died when I was very young due to injuries received in Vietnam. Therefore, I was eligible for the WV War Orphan program. But for that financial support coupled with the benefits of my own service, I would be among the many WV residents who did not attend college or any other academic program beyond high school. That benefit changed my life. I am the first member of my immediate family to attend and complete a college degree program. HB 2610 extends similar benefits to disable veterans of more than 50% and their dependents. Those service related disabled veterans lost a piece of themselves in service to this great country. Recognizing that sacrifice through passage of HB 2610 is a tremendous way for the state to show gratitude to such veterans and to produce an educated workforce that will improve the economic status of this great State.

Again, I ask you to support this piece of legislation.

Kindest regards,
Jody Ogle, Colonel (Ret), USAF