



October 7, 2016

The Honorable Joe Straus
Speaker
Texas House of Representatives
Room 2W.13
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Speaker Straus:

On behalf of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America's (IAVA) more than 400,000 members, I am expressing our opposition to any and all cuts to the Hazlewood Act, particularly recent proposals to scale back the Hazlewood Legacy Program for veterans' children.

Some of IAVA's strongest and most active member chapters are located in Texas, and our members are grateful that the Texas Legislature has historically supported its veterans, not just with praise, but also with state policies that reward them for their military service.

One of these state policies is the Hazlewood Act. With its origins dating back to 1923, the Hazlewood Act has been one of the most important state benefits afforded to Texas veterans by providing qualified veterans, spouses, and dependent children with up to 150 hours of tuition exemptions at Texas public institutions of higher learning. This law has been critical in assisting Texas veterans obtain an education following their military service.

The defense of promised and earned benefits for military service are central to IAVA's mission, and we are in a major fight in Washington, DC now to fight unprecedented cuts to the Post-9/11 GI Bill. This should not be a fight we should have to make, especially while we are still at war.

Texas veterans have made great sacrifices in service to our nation, and IAVA believes they deserve the veteran education benefits that they have earned. Please contact IAVA Legislative Director Tom Porter at (202) 544--7692 or thomas@iava.org.

Sincerely,

Paul Rieckhoff
Founder and CEO
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America