



201 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 838-8113

July 7, 2006

The Honorable Bill Nelson
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

The Military Coalition, a consortium of nationally prominent military and veterans service organizations representing more than 5.5 million members, commends you for successfully sponsoring your anti-predatory lending amendment (SA 4331) to S. 2766, the Fiscal Year 2007 National Defense Authorization Act.

Recent media reports spotlight images of streets leading to military bases replete with businesses offering “fast cash loans.” A visit to a Navy installation in Norfolk, Va., or Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., will authenticate this reality and demonstrate a clear need for Congressional action to address these widespread practices.

Many of the brave men and women who volunteer to serve in the military enlist immediately after graduating from high school. Understandably, they have limited experience in financial matters and are easy targets for unscrupulous lenders. The average young servicemember already lives on a relatively low income, and can ill afford to be saddled with ridiculously high interest loans and other indebtedness. The actions of these predators must be regulated, and abuses made punishable by federal law.

Most importantly, the Military Coalition believes that this amendment will have a positive impact on readiness. Unregulated predatory lenders represent a serious danger to national security because a servicemember experiencing debt-related stresses may be less focused on the mission – potentially compromising not only his or her safety, but also that of the entire unit.

The Military Coalition has long supported the Servicemembers’ Anti-Predatory Lending Protection Act (H.R. 97) introduced by Representative Sam Graves in the House, and is pleased that the Senate unanimously agreed to uniform, commonsense provisions to protect our troops from predatory lenders by adopting the Talent-Nelson amendment.

The Coalition salutes your leadership on this issue and stands ready to assist you and your staff in working to have this important provision enacted into law.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition
(Signatures enclosed)

cc: Representative Sam Graves

Air Force Association
Air Force Sergeants Association
Air Force Women Officers Associated
American Logistics Association
AMVETS (American Veterans)
Army Aviation Association of America
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States
Association of the United States Army
Chief Warrant Officer and Warrant Officer Association, U.S. Coast Guard
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
Fleet Reserve Association
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
Marine Corps League
Marine Corps Reserve Association
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Association for Uniformed Services
National Guard Association of the United States
National Military Family Association
National Order of Battlefield Commissions
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Naval Reserve Association
Navy League of the United States
Non Commissioned Officers Association
Reserve Enlisted Association of the United States
Reserve Officers Association
Society of Medical Consultants to the Armed Forces
The Retired Enlisted Association
United Armed Forces Association
United States Army Warrant Officers Association
United States Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
Veterans' Widows International Network