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**Senate VA Committee Advances Comprehensive G.I. Bill That Includes Three Heller Provisions**

**Washington, D.C.** – Today, U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) joined with his colleagues on the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs to advance the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, comprehensive, bipartisan legislation that seeks to improve veterans’ education benefits and enhance the post-9/11 G.I. Bill. The legislation is cosponsored by Heller and includes three of his provisions to benefit Nevada’s veteran and military communities.

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act makes much-needed updates for reservists, Purple Heart recipients, and veterans who face school closures while enrolled and surviving family members. The legislation also provides increased resources and authority for educational assistance to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs, computer programming and career technical training. Most significantly, this bill recognizes our country’s need for an agile and adaptable workforce and that American workers need to be lifelong learners. For that purpose, this bill eliminates the arbitrary 15-year period within which a veteran is required to use their G.I. Bill so they can use their benefits at any time in their professional career.

“I was proud to join with colleagues on the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee to help introduce and advance legislation that bolsters G.I. Bill benefits that many of Nevada veterans and service members rely on,” **said Heller**. "This comprehensive legislation will further veterans’ education and help them improve skills necessary to access good-paying jobs. I want to thank Chairman Isakson and Ranking Member Tester for their leadership and I'll continue to work to see this bill become law so that Nevada's veterans have more tools to succeed.”

**Heller Provisions Included In The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act:**

 **S. 1362, Heller’s Guard and Reservists Education Improvement Act:** This legislation adjusts the G.I. bill tier structure to increase the benefit payable percentage for Guardsmen and Reservists who served less than 12months. In many cases, time spent on initial training does not count toward active-duty time.

 **S.1277, VET TEC Act of 2017 (Heller is an Original Cosponsor):** This provision would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to conduct a pilot program allowing veterans to access non-traditional technology education programs, including in the areas of computer programming, computer software, media application, and information sciences.

 **S. 1489, Veterans Education Relief and Reinstatement Act (VERRA) of 2017 (Heller is an Original Cosponsor):** VERRA would expand the VA’s authority to restore the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits of veterans who are affected by the permanent closure of ITT Tech or other institutions. Currently, VA cannot fully restore a veterans’ benefits if a school they attend permanently closes.

The Harry W*.* Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 has broad bipartisan support in the Senate and is cosponsored by U.S. Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO), John Boozman (R-AR), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Shelley Moore-Capito (R-WV), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Susan Collins (R-ME), John Cornyn (R-TX), Mike Crapo (R-ID), Steve Daines (R-MT), Joe Donnelly (D-IN), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Deb Fischer (R-NE), Al Franken (D-MN), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Jim Inhofe (R-OK), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Jerry Moran (R-KS), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Gary Peters (D-MI), Pat Roberts (R-KS), Mike Rounds (R-SD), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), Thom Tillis (R-NC), and Tom Udall (D-NM).

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