

Untitled document

Voluntary identification card can be used for recognition of service on national level

November 9, 2011

WASHINGTON – Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) introduced legislation in the House of Representatives last week to authorize a national identification card for former members of the Armed Forces. Any former member of the armed services can purchase the card, which can be used at commercial establishments, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies that hold special offers, discounts, or services for former armed services personnel. Congressman Frank Guinta (NH-01) is an original cosponsor of the bill.

Bass said:

"In my many meetings with New Hampshire's veterans' community, it was brought to my attention that veterans did not have an easy way to prove that they honorably served our country. With their input and advice, we worked together on developing this legislation.

"While some states have created their own versions of an identification card with their own set of criteria, a federally-authorized card can be used in all states, making it easier for veterans to prove their prior service when necessary. What's more, this voluntary card will not cost taxpayers any money but give veterans the option of obtaining a nationally-recognized identification card if they so choose.

"The recognition that our servicemen and women deserve extends beyond a piece of paper, but this legislation is a step in the right direction in honoring and recognizing their service to our nation."

Captain Bill Joransen, USN (Ret.) of Nashua, the immediate past president of the New England District of the Association of the United States Navy, said, "A national identification card will recognize and identify veterans for their valued service. The card will provide veterans with a means to identify themselves for past service that in many cases is inconvenient or untimely using other documents. This is a win-win for veterans and organizations that support veterans."

Master Sergeant Bobby Broneske, USAF (Ret.) of Londonderry, the Vice Chairman of the State Veterans Advisory Committee, said, "A national veterans' identification card is a great idea. Several states already do this, and giving this option to all former armed services personnel nationwide will benefit all veterans, especially those who do not have a retired military ID or VA ID. It is easier for veterans to carry a small identification card than a copy of their DD-214 forms everywhere."

Sergeant Marcia Bailey, USA/NHNG (Ret.) of Charlestown, the past Secretary of Rolling Thunder and the current American Legion Post 29 Commander said, "I'm glad Congressman Bass submitted this legislation so veterans can have better recognition. Once we're able to get

this legislation signed into law, I recommend that veterans get a card and present it to all participating businesses and organizations for discounts and other services."

Specifically, Bass' legislation (H.R. 3293) will authorize the Secretary of Defense (and the Secretary of Homeland Security, in the case of the U.S. Coast Guard) to issue, at no cost to the United States, a military service identification card to any person who served in the Armed Forces on active duty for more than 180 days. The cost of the card will be covered by the servicemember and amount to no more than the cost it takes to produce the card, costing the federal government nothing.

The bill has been referred to the House Armed Services Committee.

-- 30 --