



## In Iowa's Interest:

### Celebrating Those Who Served

*by Senator Tom Harkin*

November 11<sup>th</sup> is Veterans Day, a time to celebrate and thank those who have served in The United States Armed Forces – some 22.6 million veterans around the country, more than 240,000 of whom are Iowans. As a veteran and member of American Legion Post 562 in Cumming, I know the profound love a veteran has for this country. All veterans showed their patriotism by defending this country when their service was needed. Honoring that sacrifice is something we all have a stake in.

To that end, my office is working to ensure veterans have access to education benefits, health care, and other services to ensure they are successful both on and off the battlefield.

As a member of the Veterans Jobs Caucus, I supported the Veterans' Jobs Bill, which would have provided \$1 billion over five years to help veterans find work in their communities. Passage of this legislation is critical not only to the economic security of our veterans, but also to the communities across Iowa and the country that stand to benefit from their contributions to the economy.

As a recipient of the original GI Bill benefits, I understand how critical this assistance is for returning veterans' success. For that reason, I am working to protect these benefits against low-quality for-profit colleges that overpromise, overcharge, and under-deliver to our veterans, using slick marketing campaigns to recruit them in order to profit off their education benefits. In fact, data collected by the Senate HELP Committee shows that these benefits may be aiding some schools that otherwise would struggle to meet federal rules.

Legislation I have introduced will ensure that taxpayers' investment in federal assistance for college students is used to educate and support students, rather than being wasted on advertising, marketing, and recruitment. The Protecting Financial Aid for Students and Taxpayers Act will maximize federal student aid by prohibiting the use of Pell Grants, federal student loans, the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, and other federal education funds for such practices, similar to a current law that bans the use of federal higher education dollars for lobbying. In addition, I have worked on a bipartisan basis on legislation aimed at providing every veteran who receives educational assistance from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) with the counseling services needed to make informed decisions about their education.

I also continue to hear from veterans about service medals that have not been awarded. My office has helped countless veterans and their families obtain medals. Please contact any of my offices in Iowa or Washington, D.C. to inquire about this service. My staff is happy to assist any constituent to receive the recognition they have rightly earned.

We only accomplish our mission by working together. This lesson is as applicable now as it was during my years of service. And I join my fellow Americans in honoring the brave men and woman who have served our country and in pledging to do all that I can to ensure their success both on the battlefield, but also in their civilian life.

For more information, please visit <http://www.harkin.senate.gov/>.