



MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

CHARTERED BY CONGRESS

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
5413-B BACKLICK ROAD
SPRINGFIELD, VA 22151-3960
Phone: (703) 642-5360
Fax: (703) 642-2054

January 23, 2018

The Honorable Thomas J. Rooney
2160 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

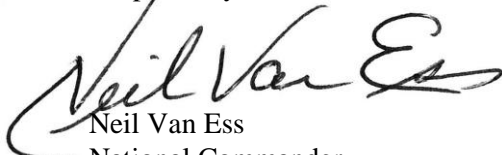
Dear Congressman Rooney:

On behalf of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), whose membership is comprised entirely of combat wounded veterans, I am pleased to offer our support for H.R. 506, the *Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2017*, which would create penalties for individuals who defraud veterans and their families for the benefits they earned.

It is already illegal for individuals to charge veterans fees for assistance in obtaining benefits, such as disability compensation and pension, through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Unfortunately, there is no penalty for individuals who break this law, scamming veterans and their survivors out of a portion of the benefits they need and deserve. This crime is particularly objectionable, considering that veterans' benefits assistance is readily available from accredited service officers of non-profit organizations such as MOPH, as well as state and local agencies around the country, completely free of charge. Your legislation would help put an end to this fraudulent activity by finally creating penalties for those who would take advantage of those who have served our nation in uniform.

MOPH thanks you for your leadership on this issue, and your commitment to veterans and their families. We look forward to working with you to ensure the passage of this important legislation.

Respectfully,


Neil Van Ess
National Commander