

## **Enlisted Association of the Arkansas National Guard (EAANG) Resolution**

**AR 15 - 02**

**TITLE:** Arkansas National Guard College Tuition Incentives.

**SHORT DESCRIPTION:** Call upon the State of Arkansas to establish an Arkansas National Guard College Tuition Incentive program.

**PROPOSAL TYPE:** New Submission

**SUBMITTER:** SFC James H. Howard

**BUSINESS CASE:** Currently, Arkansas National Guardsmen, both Army and Air Force, face unique difficulties in financing a college education. Among the challenges are the limited funding for Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) programs, and restrictions on the usage of GI Bill benefits while receiving FTA funds. Additionally, contrary to popular belief, not all National Guardsmen are eligible for Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, or Chapter 30 GI Bill benefits, but rather most are eligible for the much lower paying Chapter 1606 GI Bill. As a result, Guardsmen may return to school for a short period of time, only to later leave school due to an unavailability of funds. These Guardsmen typically do not return to school. Easing the financial burden on Arkansas National Guardsmen would not only allow those currently serving to better complete their education, but would also provide a great incentive to future service to the State of Arkansas.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Enlisted Association of the Arkansas National Guard (EAANG) urges the Governor and Arkansas Legislature to establish an Arkansas National Guard College Tuition Incentive program that would recognize the unique sacrifices of the Arkansas National Guard, and reward them for their continued service to the Great State of Arkansas. As such EAANG recommends that members of the Arkansas National Guard (Army and Air Force) who maintain satisfactory membership in the Arkansas National Guard during attendance at an Arkansas state-sponsored college or university, while pursuing up to their first bachelor's degree, shall be eligible for a waiver of remaining, unpaid tuition, up to 30 credit/semester hours per school year, while attending an Arkansas state-sponsored college or university, after all of the following financial incentives for which the Guardsman is eligible, have been applied:

- Federal grants awarded based upon completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- State grants and scholarships awarded based upon completion of the Arkansas YOUiversal application.
- Institutional scholarships.
- Federal armed forces tuition assistance, commonly called FTA, up to the annual limit.
- Arkansas National Guard tuition assistance, commonly called GTIP, up to the annual limit.
- Additionally, Arkansas Guardsmen may not be required to apply for or receive loans, or VA educational benefits as part of this program.