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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to support the manager's mark for H.R. 8070, the Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement Act and National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY2025, and to oppose any amendment to create a voucher-like scheme in the Department of Defense Education Authority (DoDEA). Votes on this legislation may be included in NEA's report card for the 118th Congress.

The Federal Education Association (FEA), an NEA affiliate, represents educators serving 66,000 students in 160 schools administered by DoDEA—the children of active duty military and civilian employees of the Department of Defense (DoD). In February, we conveyed our priorities for the FY2025 NDAA. We are pleased to see some of them reflected in the bill, including:

- Extending the current maximum student-to-teacher ratios until 2030. Those ratios are 18:1 for grades K-3 and approximately 24:1 for grades 3-12.
- Requiring the Secretary of Defense to research and report on the effectiveness of efforts to reduce standardized testing redundancies. A recent [U.S. Government Accountability Office \(GAO\) study](#) found that K-12 students in DoDEA schools spend more time on standardized tests than their counterparts in nearby school districts—24 school days vs. 16 school days.

We are also pleased that the bill would require the Departments of Defense and Education to enter into a data-sharing agreement to streamline the process for military-service members and DoD civilian employees, including DoDEA educators, to receive Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF).

To improve the bill, we urge you to support the amendment by Rep. Jeff Jackson to re-establish an educator transfer program in DoDEA. Currently, teachers who would like to move to another overseas location—or must move because their spouse is permanently transferred—are required to teach for one year in the United States or undertake a lengthy reapplication process.

We also strongly urge you to oppose any amendment to create a voucher-like scheme in DoDEA. The proposed allowance for schooling military dependents in Bahrain would rob DoDEA of resources and open the door to stripping students of First Amendment, due process, and other constitutional and statutory rights. School vouchers also lack academic and fiscal accountability, which makes fraud and abuse more likely—especially in cases like this, where funds would be going to schools or institutions outside the purview of the United States.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association