



State Representative Timothy J. DeGeeter

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Rep. DeGeeter Praises Executive Order Creating *Ohio GI Promise*

Parma Lawmaker: Program Good for Servicemembers, Families, Ohio's Future

COLUMBUS – State Representative Timothy J. DeGeeter (D-Parma) praised Ohio Governor Ted Strickland's signing Tuesday of an executive order creating *The Ohio GI Promise*.

The order makes any United States military veterans, their spouses, and their children "honorary Ohioans" if they choose to attend an Ohio college or university. That means they would be charged in-state tuition rates. Governor Strickland said on Tuesday that significant savings, coupled with the new federal GI Bill signed into law last month, would make a college education for nearly all veterans free.

"This new measure guarantees tremendous educational and economic opportunities here at home for the troops and family members who give so much of themselves for our country," Rep. DeGeeter said.

The Ohio GI Promise signed by the Governor today also:

- Establishes a Council to market the University System of Ohio to veterans across the country and ensure the best possible programs and services at those schools for veterans
- Launches a hotline (1-877-VETS-OH-1) and website (<http://universitysystem.ohio.gov/veterans>) to serve as gateways to information for veterans on Ohio colleges and universities
- Schedule a fall conference to consider what procedures and services should be implemented for veterans at all Ohio colleges and universities
- Expand the allowed use of Ohio National Guard Scholarships for graduate study, housing, books/supplies and transportation (currently only used for tuition and fees)
- Certify all Ohio colleges and universities as "Servicemember Opportunity Colleges" for purposes of transferring college credit earned during military service to institutions of higher learning in Ohio

"The benefits of *The Ohio GI Promise* are far-reaching," Rep. DeGeeter said. "Our servicemen and women gain access to an affordable, world-class education, and Ohio's economy gains potential employees with skills and work ethics that any company would want. We can pair this Promise with the economic stimulus we already passed to promote Ohio as a premier destination for new investment and opportunities for businesses. It's a win-win situation."