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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION AND
FORESTRY
BANKING, HOUSING AND
URBAN AFFAIRS
COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND
TRANSPORTATION
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
INDIAN AFFAIRS

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Postsecondary Education
1990 K Street, N.W., Room 6166
Washington, D.C. 2006-8544

Dear Honorable Secretary Duncan,

I am writing to express my support for the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success grant application submitted by Central Community College (CCC) in Grand Island, Nebraska.

Central Community College serves rural central Nebraska with campuses or ancillary facilities in six locations in a 25-county service area. These locations coincide exactly with locations of Nebraska Army National Guard Armories and some Army Reserve Readiness Centers. The majority of young veterans returning to Nebraska from overseas operations come from the reserve component. Central Community College is positioned to be a major force in assisting rural area veterans with their educational needs.

The CCC proposal contains innovative ways to assist veterans in a coordinated fashion. Veteran points of contact at all six college locations will provide immediate access for veterans questions. Likewise, veteran centers at each location will encourage them to work together toward common educational goals. Finally, use of current network technology for outreach will provide timely answers to questions and access to resources.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am very concerned about the fate of veterans in rural areas. Congress stepped up to provide the Post-9/11 GI Bill to our worthy veterans. While the program is proving to be a great success, my staff spends significant time assisting veterans in obtaining benefits. Additionally, returning reservists often face many personal and financial issues upon returning from Iraq or Afghanistan. The CCC proposal seeks to deal with this myriad of issues through a comprehensive program that will reach approximately half of Nebraska's geographical area.

Central Community College should be commended for its efforts to serve our precious Nebraska veterans. Please feel free to contact me or Lindsay Murray in my Omaha office at 402-758-8981 if you have questions as you review this application.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Mike Johannns
United States Senator

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