

Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Tiffany Champion, (210) 733-6604

SENATOR VAN DE PUTTE APPLAUDS EFFORTS OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

The U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education Raymond Simon and U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England have announced they will sign a formal agreement linking the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Defense's efforts to improve the quality of education, and address unique challenges faced by children of military families. The signing will take place today, Wednesday, June 25, at 3:30 p.m. EDT, at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Senator Van de Putte said the following regarding this important announcement; and her plans to coordinate similar policy at the state level:

"As Chair of the Texas Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations, I applaud the efforts of our federal government to improve the educational system for our military families. However, much of our military children's educational needs must be addressed at the state level.

"Our military families face many unique challenges through frequent moves and deployments; and we must strive to minimize the difficulties they experience. The average military child will attend a range of six to nine different school systems between kindergarten and 12th grade. Although the armed services have made progress in the transition of personnel, the state must ease the transition process for our military children, by ensuring these children are not penalized by rigid and impractical administrative practices.

"In the coming legislative session, I will sponsor legislation to work with the Department of Defense, the National Center for Interstate Compacts and the Council of State Governments, in order to develop an Interstate Compact that addresses common educational transition issues of our military families.

"The Interstate Compact program is intended to create a uniform policy in every school district, in the states that choose to participate in the Compact. Therefore, if Texas chooses to adopt the Interstate Compact program, it will allow uniform treatment of military children transferring between school districts, including between different states.

"Military service can create a myriad of challenges for families; and we must reduce the stresses endured. With Independence Day upon us, there is no better time to demonstrate our gratitude to those who fight to preserve our freedom. Our military is going to great extents to support our country, and in doing so, are making sacrifices at home. Therefore, our military children deserve every opportunity we can give them in return."