EMPOWERMENT TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC SUCCESS

Many injured veterans and family members have the potential to become economic leaders in their communities. Others may simply face unfair hurdles when trying to earn a living. Where possible, policy makers should facilitate successes.

- ★ Given the nature of military life, veterans and military families face challenges when trying to establish their qualifications for civilian employment. For family members, frequent relocations make it difficult to establish state based occupational licenses and credentials. For veterans, skill sets gained in service are often overlooked by civilian licensing and certification boards. Where possible, policy makers and professional associations should streamline credentialing for veterans and family members to allow them to find employment consistent with their skills and experience.

- ★ Representing the largest investment in veterans' education since World War II, the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill is an important benefit to veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. Unfortunately, unscrupulous educational providers have used a variety of deceptive and sometimes fraudulent tactics to recruit and enroll students in programs that do not lead to advertised jobs and salaries. Where possible, policies should be crafted to prevent these schemes.

- ★ The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) provides important skills that allow separating service members to succeed in the civilian world. Improvements have been made to this program in recent years. Policy makers should continue to update the TAP program to make it relevant and useful to separating service members.

- ★ While many men and women return from combat stronger and empowered, research shows that some returning from conflict are at risk of becoming ensnared in the justice system. Veterans' treatment courts (VTCs) have emerged as an encouraging alternative to traditional courts for veterans suffering from mental health issues or substance abuse. In many cases, these courts utilize veterans as peer mentors, empowering these individuals to give back to their community. WWP encourages states and localities to adopt VTCs and appreciates the Uniform Law Commission's efforts in drafting a model law.