



For Immediate Release:

Tuesday, July 8, 2008

Contact: Keith Dailey

614 644 0957/614 506-4949

Keith.Dailey@governor.ohio.gov

Ohio Becomes First State to Offer In-State Tuition to All GI Bill Participants

COLUMBUS, OH –Ohio Governor Ted Strickland today signed an executive order establishing *The Ohio GI Promise*, which changes Ohio’s residence requirements to allow all veterans of the U.S. Armed Services, their spouses, and dependents who choose to attend Ohio colleges and universities to do so at in-state tuition rates.

“This is a great benefit for veterans, as well as for Ohio,” Strickland said. “It delivers real support to veterans while helping strengthen Ohio’s strategic plan for higher education, which calls for attracting and keeping talent in the state. Who better to have as part of Ohio’s colleges and universities, workforce and communities than the veterans who have served, led, and protected our country?”

The new program comes on the heels of the new GI Bill passed by Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush June 30, which doubles college benefits for eligible troops and veterans, essentially guaranteeing full scholarships at any in-state public college or university, as well as providing monthly housing stipends.

“Ohio is opening its arms to members of the military and their families at a time when the state has made historic investments in its higher education system to spur economic growth,” said Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut. “Veteran students bring maturity, motivation and leadership with them. They are precisely the kind of students Ohio needs in its colleges and universities.”

In addition to modifying residency requirements for veterans and their families, the executive order will also:

- **Establish *The Ohio GI Promise Council*.** *The Ohio GI Promise Council* will be charged with marketing educational opportunities in Ohio for veterans nationwide and ensuring that Ohio’s colleges and universities have the best programs and support services available for veterans.

- **Launch *The Ohio GI Promise Hotline and Web site.*** A 1-877- VETS-OH-1 hotline and Web site at <http://universitysystem.ohio.gov/veterans> will serve as gateways to educational opportunities for veterans and will help interested veterans connect with specific colleges and programs.
- **Schedule a University System of Ohio system-wide conference on veterans services.** A fall 2008 conference sponsored by the Ohio Department of Veterans Services and the Ohio Board of Regents will bring together every Ohio higher education institution's office of veterans services to examine best practices and what should be implemented at every institution. There will be representatives at this conference from the U.S. Military, the National Guard, the American Council on Education, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and other local and regional veterans services organizations. Working with the Ohio GI Promise Council, the goal of the conference will be to prepare and coordinate campus services.
- **Expand the use of Ohio National Guard Scholarships.** The Ohio Board of Regents will propose and support legislation to allow Ohio National Guard Scholarships to be used for graduate study, housing, books and supplies and transportation. Currently, the scholarships may only be used for tuition and fees.
- **Designate Ohio colleges and universities "Servicemember Opportunity Colleges."** The Ohio Board of Regents will work with the American Council on Education (ACE) to certify all Ohio colleges and universities as "Servicemember Opportunity Colleges." This will allow all college credit received during military service approved by ACE to transfer to every University System of Ohio institution.