

Mr. Keith Scott
Director, The National Center for Interstate Compacts
The Council of State Governments
2760 Research Park Drive
P.O. Box 11910
Lexington, Kentucky 40578-1910

Dear Mr. Scott:

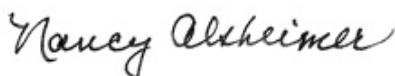
The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is the only national organization whose sole focus is the military family and whose goal is to influence the development and implementation of policies that will improve the lives of the families of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. For almost 40 years, its staff and volunteers, comprised mostly of military family members, have built a reputation for being the leading experts on military family issues.

On behalf of NMFA and the families it serves, we strongly endorse the *Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children*. This important agreement will greatly enhance the quality of life of our military families and needs to be implemented as soon as possible. Designed to enable cooperation between states, the compact allows for the uniform treatment of military children transferring between school districts and states. It recognizes that states, no matter how supportive they are of military children, can only control what happens within their individual borders. By uniting with other states in the compact, each state can ensure that “their” children have the educational opportunities they deserve, even when those children move to another state. By joining the compact now, states will have the opportunity to influence the compact rulemaking to ensure “its” military children receive the support they need.

Military families place a high value on education and define the quality of that education differently than most states or districts that look only at issues within their boundaries. For military families, it is not enough for children to be doing well in their current schools; they must also be prepared for the next location. Military families do not want special privileges for their children, only a level playing field. Above all, they do not want their children to make unnecessary sacrifices for a parent’s military service. Though military family life comes with many rewards, it is not always easy. Our families endure long separations and repeated deployments, routine moves, and constant change. For children and teens navigating adolescence, this lifestyle can often be extremely difficult. That is why it is important for states to work together to alleviate additional burdens placed on military children. NMFA believes this compact provides the vehicle needed to promote this state cooperation.

As a member of both the Advisory Group and Drafting Team, NMFA is pleased to have been among the policy makers and stake holders that assisted in the development of this compact. NMFA firmly believes that the *Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children* will significantly help mitigate some of the many challenges military children and their families face when moving.

Sincerely,



Nancy Alsheimer
Chairman, Board of Governors