SEC. ___. ONE-YEAR EXTENSION OF AUTHORITIES RELATING TO THE TRANSITION AND SUPPORT OF MILITARY DEPENDENT STUDENTS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.

Section 574(c)(3) of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (20 U.S.C. 7703b note) is amended by striking “September 30, 2016” and inserting “September 30, 2017".

Section-by-Section Analysis

This proposal would authorize the Secretary of Defense to continue to directly support and leverage influence of local educational agencies (LEAs) serving the approximately 617,000 school-aged children from military-connected families living in the United States who do not attend Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Schools through September 30, 2017 . Over 80% are enrolled in U.S. Public Schools.

The goal of the authority is to support the DoDEA Educational Partnership mission of championing quality education opportunities for school-aged military children in pursuit of promoting continuity in academic and social support programs in LEAs. The DoDEA Educational Partnership Strategies includes:

a. Data and research to enable us to best serve military connected students;
b. Academic and other supports to ensure quality educational options;
c. Social, emotional, and community supports to help address the stresses of military life; and
d. Empowerment of military families to serve as advocates for their child’s education. Provide stakeholders with effective resources to support efforts to ease the transition of military students and provide resources to local education agencies (LEA) who educate military children.

This proposal would authorize DoDEA to support the Partnership mission and strategies by providing funding to LEAs, developing partnerships with colleges and universities, and providing outreach to stakeholders. This authority would enable DoDEA to reach beyond the smaller population of military-connected students who attend DoDEA schools, (estimated to be around 4% of the total population of military-connected students in the United States) to the remaining military-connected students who are not eligible to attend DoDEA schools, including students whose parents are among the Reserve forces or the National Guard.

The authority would ensure that the resources shared would support research-based programs that aim to increase student achievement and ease the challenges military children face due to their parents military service. The authority would provide resources to military-connected LEAs to develop and implement projects and opportunities that are designed to:

a. Promote student achievement in the core curricular areas.

b. Ease the challenges that military students face due to transitions and deployments.
c. Support the unique social and emotional needs of military students.
d. Promote distance learning opportunities.
e. Improve educator professional development.
f. Enhance and integrate technology.
g. Encourage parental involvement.

There is a critical need for this authority. The inconsistencies in the quality of education remain significant, and the authority for DoD to directly engage and influence the educational opportunities of military-connected students in public schools has proven to be a powerful tool on behalf of military-connected children.

The need for such assistance is substantial. The authority allows us to address the Secretary's interest in how the Department can optimize educational delivery in the United States for under-performing public schools supporting large military installations. The Secretary has met with families who expressed serious concerns about the poor educational services provided by the public schools supporting our bases.

As further evidence, the Chief of Staff of the Army directed an assessment of the performance of public schools that support Army children and youth. Quality education opportunities for Army children and youth are essential to ensure the readiness and retention of Soldiers. The quality of schools and their children's education is a prime concern of Army families.

The return on investment for such assistance is valid and substantial. To date, DoDEA has awarded more than 273 grants to LEAs, reaching more than 370,000 military connected students in over 1,500 public schools in 33 states. Data indicate that there is significant improvement in student achievement, increased professional development for teachers, and enhanced social and emotional support as a result of these awards. Nearly 80 percent of the grantees are focused on improving student outcomes in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education, which is essential in preparing our students for success in the competitive global world.

The quality of K-12 education is an important criterion for military families as they make career decisions on assignments, and is linked to retention and readiness in the military services.

The authority allows DoD to address the commitments outlined in the Presidential Study Directive, Strengthening Military Families, which outlines DoD goals and metrics to ensure that education, care and support of military families are a top national security priority.

Budget Implications: Neither the authority nor the initiatives implemented under the auspices of the authority create costs to the Services. The proposal requests DoD retain the authority for one additional year to share resources with LEAs supporting military-connected students. The resources reflected in the table below are funded within the FY 2017 President's Budget.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS ($MILLIONS)									
	FY 2017	**FY 2018**	**FY 2019**	**FY 2020**	**FY 2021**	**Appropriation From**	**Budget Activity**	**Dash-1 Line Item**	**Program Element**
DoDEA	55.0					Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide	04	4GTJ	0808899BT
Total	55.0					--	--	--	--

Changes to Existing Law: This proposal would make the following changes to section 574 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007:

SEC. 574. PLAN AND AUTHORITY TO ASSIST LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES EXPERIENCING GROWTH IN ENROLLMENT DUE TO FORCE STRUCTURE CHANGES, RELOCATION OF MILITARY UNITS, OR BASE CLOSURES AND REALIGNMENTS

(a) Plan Required.-Not later than January 1, 2007, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth a plan to provide assistance to local educational agencies that experience growth in the enrollment of military dependent students as a result of any of the following events:

(1) Force structure changes.

(2) The relocation of a military unit.

(3) The closure or realignment of military installations pursuant to defense base closure and realignment under the base closure laws.

(b) Elements.-The report required by subsection (a), and each updated report required by subsection (c), shall include the following:

(1) An identification, current as of the date of the report, of the total number of military dependent students who are anticipated to be arriving at or departing from military installations as a result of any event described in subsection (a), including-

(A) an identification of the military installations affected by such arrivals and departures;

(B) an estimate of the number of such students arriving at or departing from each such installation; and

(C) the anticipated schedule of such arrivals and departures.

(2) Such recommendations as the Office of Economic Adjustment of the Department of Defense considers appropriate for means of assisting affected local educational agencies in accommodating increases in enrollment of military dependent students as a result of any such event.

(3) A plan for outreach to be conducted to affected local educational agencies, commanders of military installations, and members of the Armed Forces and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense regarding information on the assistance to be provided under the plan under subsection (a).

(c) Transition of Military Dependents Among Local Educational Agencies.-(1) The Secretary of Defense shall work collaboratively with the Secretary of Education in any efforts to ease the transitions of military dependent students from Department of Defense dependent schools to other schools and among schools of local educational agencies.

(2) The Secretary of Defense may use funds of the Department of Defense Education Activity for the following purposes:

(A) To share expertise and experience of the Activity with local educational agencies as military dependent students make the transitions described in paragraph (1), including transitions resulting from the closure or realignment of military installations under a base closure law, global rebasing, and force restructuring.

(B) To provide grant assistance programs for local educational agencies with military dependent students undergoing the transitions described in paragraph (1), including programs on the following:

(i) Access to virtual and distance learning capabilities and related applications.

(ii) Training for teachers.

(iii) Academic strategies to increase academic achievement.

(iv) Curriculum development.

(v) Support for practices that minimize the impact of transition and deployment.

(vi) Other appropriate services to improve the academic achievement of such students.

(3) The authority provided by this subsection expires ~~September 30, 2016~~ <u>September 30, 2017</u>.

(d) Definitions.-In this section:

(1) The term “base closure law” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.

(2) The term “local educational agency” has the meaning given that term in section 8013(9) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7713(9)).

(3) The term “military dependent students” refers to-

(A) elementary and secondary school students who are dependents of members of the Armed Forces;

(B) elementary and secondary school students who are dependents of civilian employees of the Department of Defense; and

(C) elementary and secondary school students who are dependents of personnel who are not members of the Armed Forces or civilian employees of the Department of Defense but who are employed on Federal property.