SEC. ____. MODIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMS UNDER THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF THE AIR FORCE.

Section 9315(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) Enlisted members of the armed forces other than the Air Force participating in joint-service medical training and education or who are serving as instructors in such joint-service medical training and education.".

Section-by-Section Analysis

This proposal would modify 10 U.S.C. 9315(b) to authorize the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) to award associate degrees to enlisted members of other services participating in joint-service medical training and education and their instructors. Specifically, this language would cover those attending the Medical Education and Training Campus (METC), a tri-service school at Ft Sam Houston, Texas, and its instructors.

In 2005 the President signed into law the recommendations of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission Report (BRAC). Shortly after BRAC results became law the Military Health System (MHS) was tasked to undergo a Medical Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). In the early stages of the Iraqi War the Services did not demonstrate interoperability in the joint environment. The MHS QDR Roadmap dated April 2006 identified 18 areas that would be studied regarding opportunities to develop, expand or improve interoperability among the Services working within a joint environment.

The 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission Report (BRAC) Recommendation 172 (MED 10) proposed relocating a daily student population of approximately 9,000 students and 1,196 faculty members from the Air Force and Navy to Fort Sam Houston to create the Medical Education and Training Campus (METC). METC senior leadership has indicated a desire to provide a joint training environment with as much standardized training as possible. The standardized training will be a result of integrating medical enlisted training courses to the greatest extent possible.

Joint Medical Education & Training (JME&T) is a joint Army, Navy, and Air Force medical education and training transformation effort initiated to support the *QDR Initiative #5—Joint Medical Education and Training* focused on Performance-Based Management—and enabled by the physical infrastructure resulting from the 2005 BRAC initiative. This strategy lays the foundation for the Military Education Training Campus (METC) and, along with the

Interservice Training Review Organization (ITRO) process, establishes a joint medical training center that capitalizes on the synergy of co-locating the training of three services, and integrating similar training, as much as feasible, while maintaining the capability to address Service-specific training requirements.

The transfer of Air Force medical courses to METC impacts 18 CCAF degree programs and 68 credit-awarding courses. In accordance with 10 U.S.C. 9315, CCAF awards Associate in Applied Science degrees to Air Force active duty, Air National Guard (ANG), and Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) enlisted members and other-service faculty members assigned to CCAF affiliated schools. METC must affiliate with CCAF for CCAF to continue to award collegiate, degree-applicable credit. Current legislation restricts CCAF to the award of degree-applicable credit (participation in CCAF degree programs) to Air Force enlisted members and METC faculty only. Navy has existing partnerships with numerous academic institutions whereby a Sailor can earn an associate degree in the medical field from regionally accredited institutions that recognize American Council on Education (ACE) recommended credits. These partnerships are executed with no additional cost to the Navy. The proposed change to 10 U.S.C. Section 9315, would increase the number of options Navy and Coast Guard students have in pursuit of their degrees.

The associate degree from CCAF, or any other accredited institution, is a human capital investment where the student increases his educational experience base, improves self-esteem, and builds confidence. This investment provides support and documentation for future academic achievement, improves job performance, translates military education and training into semester hours and academic terms understood by civilian educators and employers, and aids in transition to the civilian job market. A two-year degree is associated with significantly higher lifetime earnings. The value of these degrees to the armed forces is that it enhances readiness, provides degree programs directly related to military occupations, enhances the competence of enlisted members, builds better leaders, encourages personal responsibility, aids in retaining quality personnel, ensures a healthy use of off-duty time by members pursuing a degree, and aids in recruiting a quality force. Air Force recruits cite "continue education on active duty" as the number one reason for joining the Air Force. The value of expanding the CCAF program to METC is that it offers enlisted personnel from other services more choices as they pursue their education goals. CCAF is a "win-win" program for enlisted members attending METC, the armed forces, and the nation.

The Air Force and Navy and their Surgeons General support the change to 10 U.S.C. 9315 that would allow CCAF to award associate degrees to all enlisted personnel completing courses at the METC. The Army is opposed to the legislative proposal and their personnel would not be included if the legislation is enacted.

Budget Implications: The Department of Defense (DoD) estimates that this proposal would cost $.565 million in fiscal year (FY) 2014 and $1.326 million over the first 5-year period.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS ($ MILLIONS) (offset to fund legislative proposal and incorporated in President's budget submission)								
	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	Appropriation To	Budget Activity	Dash-1 Line Item
OM	$.565	$.183	$.189	$.193	$.197	O&M AF	BA 03	033C-320
Total	$.565	$.183	$.189	$.193	$.197			

Note: Funds two manpower positions: One Civilian to serve as an Education Technician and one Navy NCO to support additional Navy students.

NUMBER OF PERSONNEL AFFECTED								
	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	Appropriation From	Budget Activity	Dash-1 Line Item
Army	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	O&M AF	BA 04	4G-4GTJ
Navy	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	O&M AF	BA 04	4G-4GTJ
Marine Corps	0	0	0	0	0	O&M AF	BA 04	4G-4GTJ
Coast Guard	24	24	24	24	24	O&M AF	BA 04	4G-4GTJ
Air Force	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	O&M AF	BA 03	033C-320
Total	11,024	11,024	11,024	11,024	11,024			

COST METHODOLOGY:

- Funding would be required for two additional people; software development and licenses; and additional equipment.
- There are no offsets for the Air Force. [Other services could expect some offsets as CCAF associate degrees are less expensive to produce than civilian 2-year degrees.]

Changes to Existing Law: This section would make the following changes to 10 U.S.C. 9315:

§ 9315. Community College of the Air Force: associate degrees

(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND MISSION.—There is in the Air Force a Community College of the Air Force. Such college, in cooperation with civilian colleges and universities, shall -

(1) prescribe programs of higher education for enlisted members described in subsection (b) designed to improve the technical, managerial, and related skills of such members and to prepare such members for military jobs which require the utilization of such skills; and

(2) monitor on a continuing basis the progress of members pursuing such programs.

(b) MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR PROGRAMS.—Subject to such other eligibility requirements as the Secretary concerned may prescribe, the following members of the Armed Forces are eligible to participate in programs of higher education under subsection (a)(1):

(1) Enlisted members of the Air Force.

(2) Enlisted members of the armed forces other than the Air Force who are serving as instructors at Air Force training schools.

(3) Enlisted members of the armed forces other than the Air Force participating in joint-service medical training and education or who are serving as instructors in such joint-service medical training and education.

(c) SERIOUSLY WOUNDED, ILL, OR INJURED FORMER AND RETIRED ENLISTED. - (1) The Secretary of the Air Force may authorize participation in a program of higher education under subsection (a)(1) by a person who is a former or retired enlisted member of the armed forces who at the time of the person's separation from active duty -

(A) had commenced but had not completed a program of higher education under subsection (a)(1); and

(B) is categorized by the Secretary concerned as seriously wounded, ill, or injured.

(2) For purposes of this subsection, a person who may be categorized as seriously wounded, ill, or injured is a person with a serious injury or illness (as that term is defined in section 1602(8) of the Wounded Warrior Act (title XVI of Public Law 110-181; 10 U.S.C. 1071 note)).

(3) A person may not be authorized under paragraph (1) to participate in a program of higher education after the end of the 10-year period beginning on the date of the person's separation from active duty.

(4) The Secretary may not pay the tuition for participation in a program of higher education under subsection (a)(1) of a person participating in such program pursuant to an authorization under paragraph (1).

(d) ASSOCIATE DEGREES. - (1) Subject to paragraph (2), an academic degree at the level of associate may be conferred under section 9317 of this title upon any enlisted member who has completed a program prescribed by the Community College of the Air Force.

(2) No degree may be conferred upon any enlisted member under this section unless the Secretary of Education determines that the standards for the award of academic degrees in agencies of the United States have been met.