SEC. ___. REPEAL OF STATUTORY SPECIFICATION OF MINIMUM DURATION OF IN-RESIDENT INSTRUCTION FOR COURSES OFFERED AS PART OF PHASE II JOINT PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION.

(a) REPEAL OF STATUTORY DURATIONAL MINIMUM.—Section 2156 of title 10, United States Code, is repealed.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 107 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 2156.

Section-by-Section Analysis

This proposal would remove the statutory minimum residency requirements for Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) II courses taught at the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) and thereby allow the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) and/or the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), consistent with authorities and responsibilities described in 10 U.S.C. 153, to determine the length and method of delivery for courses certified to award JPME-II credit. The change will provide the Department of Defense (DoD) flexibility to leverage education technology and be better empowered to balance joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational knowledge and acculturation requirements with additional and potentially more cost-effective methods of delivery for JPME phase II. DoD does not plan to create a fully non-resident JPME II course nor reduce the course's educational requirements or objectives.

JPME is a three-phase approach to learning requirements associated with joint matters specified in 10 U.S.C. 2154. However there exists a disconnect between JPME and joint duty assignments regarding a fundamental purpose of JPME, which is preparation for those assignments. Service Members receive JPME II credit by completing accredited instruction offered through the National Defense University (NDU) or Senior Level Service School (SLSS) programs. 10 U.S.C. 2156 specifies the JPME II "principal course" at the JFSC "may not be less than 10 weeks of resident instruction.

JPME II capacity, through all sources, amounts to nearly 1800 graduates annually, 1000 from the 10-week ("principal course") Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) in Norfolk, VA; all others are graduates from 10 month master's degree-level programs of the National Defense University (National War College, Eisenhower School, Joint Advanced Warfighting School) and four SLSSs. The JCWS Satellite program authorized through the FY11 NDAA has singularly increased the pool of JPME-II educated officers with direct benefit to the CCMD headquarters by 80 officers per year. Additional blended/hybrid delivery options will increase JPME phase II access and rates of completion. Although current capacity is deemed sufficient to satisfy Joint Officer Management promotion requirements (JQO Level 3 to be eligible for promotion to O-7), the SECDEF and Chairman desire to broaden education efforts in

order to create a larger pool of "strategic practitioners" focused on advancing shared values, standards, and attributes with a direct benefit to the CCDRs and staffs. In addition, the SECDEF and CJCS contend the quality of rigorous JPME-II may not be sustainable in residence at extant student levels in the current economic environment, or school house constraints. The CJCS sought and was granted authority (National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016) to deliver JPME Phase II "in residence at, or offered through the Joint Forces Staff College or a senior level service school designated and certified" as a JPME-II institution.

A blended approach to delivery of JPME-II through the JFSC will expand JPME-II opportunity, notionally affect delivery costs, and potentially affect Service TAD/TDY at a rate and amount to be determined with future research and analysis. DoD has established that there must be a residency period for JPME II. As such, a 100 percent non-resident delivered JPME II course is not an option under consideration nor an identified approach for future research and analysis.

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (Force Education) and the Joint Staff J7 (JPMED) have collaborated to develop the overarching plans and implementation strategies which will allow the Department to develop near term cost-effective means to satisfy rigorous modes of the blended/hybrid delivery of JPME II learning objectives. This proposal does not affect the Services' prerogative with regard to the screening and selection of students to attend any JPME-II program, regardless of the method of delivery.

Budgetary Implications: Minimal additional costs may be associated with the enactment of this proposal. This proposal does not levy a new requirement, however, it offers increased flexibility for re-engineering delivery within existing resources and the potential to achieve cost savings if the throughput of officers remains the same (approx. 1,800/year). The National Defense University will explore impacts to funding this potential increased throughput at JPME-II due to required increases in faculty and resources to source new delivery options. An increase in throughput may slightly increase travel costs but not per diem TAD/TDY costs. Initial estimates for a potential $500,000 increase would begin no earlier than FY 2018. The resources reflected in the table below are funded within the FY 2017 President's Budget.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS ($MILLIONS)									
	FY 2016	**FY 2017**	**FY 2018**	**FY 2019**	**FY 2020**	**Appropriation From**	**Budget Activity**	**Dash-1 Line Item**	**Program Element**
Defense-Wide	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide	03	050	080475BN
Total			0.5	0.5	0.5				

Changes to Existing Law: This proposal would repeal section 2156 of title 10, United States Code, shown below:

~~§ 2156. Joint Forces Staff College: duration of principal course of instruction~~

~~(a) DURATION.—The duration of the principal course of instruction offered at the Joint Forces Staff College may not be less than 10 weeks of resident instruction.~~

~~(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "principal course of instruction" means any course of instruction offered at the Joint Forces Staff College as Phase II joint professional military education.~~