



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
**VETERANS' AFFAIRS**  
*Republicans | Ranking Member Phil Roe, M.D.*

**H.R. 2221: Fry Scholarship Improvement Act of 2019**

**Background:**

The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry (Fry) Scholarship provides GI Bill benefits to surviving spouses and children of servicemembers who died while on active-duty. Accordingly, when a member of the National Guard or Reserve dies while on active-duty, their surviving spouse and children are eligible for the Fry Scholarship. However, if a member of the National Guard or Reserves dies while not on active-duty, their surviving spouse and children are not eligible for the Fry Scholarship - regardless of whether or not the death is otherwise considered service-connected for the purpose of receiving benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This legislation would correct that discrepancy by extending eligibility for the Fry Scholarship to surviving spouses and children of deceased National Guard and Reserve members whose deaths are deemed service-connected by VA, but who died while not on active-duty and if the death occurred within four years of the servicemember's last discharge.

**The Message:**

- Family members of National Guard and Reserve members who die due to a condition connected to their service to our nation deserve access to GI Bill benefits similar to the surviving family members of those who died on active-duty.
- The legislation would ensure Reserve and National Guard servicemembers' families receive the support they deserve to pursue higher education and a better life.