County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors

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February 10, 2025

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
304 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
1401 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R. 680, the Caring for Survivors Act– Support

Dear Congressman Panetta and Congresswoman Lofgren:

On behalf of Monterey County Board of Supervisors, we are writing to express our support for the Caring for Survivors Act (H.R. 680). This bipartisan legislation would adjust monthly benefits for family members and survivors of veterans who lost their lives in service to our country.

The Caring for Survivors Act would ease the eligibility criteria for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) to allow additional survivors to receive the benefit and increase the monthly benefit amount to match benefits provided by other federal survivor programs. Specifically, the measure would:

- Expand eligibility for DIC by replacing the "10-year" rule with a graduated scale of benefits that begins at five years for initial eligibility at 50% and gradually reaches the full benefit 10 years after determination of disability. For example, if a veteran is rated totally disabled for five years and dies of a non-service-connected cause, a survivor would be entitled to 50% of the DIC benefit.
- Increase the amount of DIC to 55% of the rate of monthly compensation received by a totally disabled veteran.

The rate of compensation paid to survivors of service members who die in the line of duty or veterans who die from service-related injuries or diseases was established in 1993. It has only been minimally adjusted since that time.

Additionally, benefits are currently restricted for survivors if the veteran was disabled for less than 10 years before death. The legislation would reduce the 10-year time frame a veteran needs to be rated totally disabled to five years, broadening eligibility to more survivors and alleviating additional burdens on family members during their time of loss.

We appreciate your support for our veteran community in Monterey County, and we urge you to cosponsor H.R. 680, the Caring for Survivors Act.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Chris M. Lopez, Chair
Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Alex Padilla, U.S. Senator for California
The Honorable Adam Schiff, U.S. Senator for California