

Pledges to continue the fight for those that protect our freedoms and defend our nation

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (NY-28) today issued a statement honoring our nation's veterans on the 68th Anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, otherwise known as the GI Bill of Rights. This historic initiative transformed our nation's workforce and middle class and helped the "Greatest Generation" redefine America as a global leader in business, science and technological innovation.

"In honoring those who dedicate their lives to protecting this great nation, we are reminded that the central themes that drove the creation of the GI Bill are as relevant today as they were 68 years ago," said Slaughter. "As a nation, we still fall short in supporting and expressing our gratitude to those men and women who, at any time, may be called upon to pay the ultimate price for the freedoms that we all enjoy. We must continue to ensure that we are worthy of their tremendous sacrifice."

In 1947, Veterans accounted for 49 percent of college admissions. By the time the original GI Bill ended on July 25, 1956, 7.8 million of the 16 million World War II Veterans had participated in an education or training program, a stunning achievement in an age when a college degree was out of reach for most Americans.

"The GI-Bill is the quintessential example of the positive role government plays in our society," said Slaughter. "By making long term, calculated investments to educate our population and prepare them for a dynamic economy, we are ensuring future growth and prosperity for all. Today, the GI Bill lives on in its current form as the "Post – 9/11 GI Bill," which I was proud to bring to the floor of the House of Representatives for passage as Chairwoman of the Rules Committee in 2008. Since then, more than 700,000 have attended college, restoring the promise of a full, four-year college education for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan and their families."

Slaughter has been a leading supporter of our armed forces. Between 2007 to 2011, she played an instrumental role in passing the largest funding increase for the Department of Veterans Affairs in our nation's history. Slaughter also worked to include the creation of a new Veterans Service Corps in the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009 to help engage veterans with their communities and assist their transition to civilian life following their military service.

Additionally, Slaughter led the fight between 2006 and 2011 to hold the Department of Defense (DoD) and defense contractors accountable for faulty body armor issued to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Her efforts led to the recall of thousands of body armor units from the field and forced DoD officials to bolster testing and manufacturer standards for equipment designed to protect our troops.