



National Lieutenant Governors Association

**Resolution on Supporting Military Children and Families by Reviewing and Distributing the “SOFAR Guide for Helping Children and Youth Cope With the Deployment and Return of a Parent in the National Guard or Other Military Reserves”**

**WHEREAS**, since 9/11, more than seven hundred thousand National Guard and other Reserve Component soldiers have been deployed and or been deactivated as of August, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, These brave men and women, face special challenges as citizen-soldiers readjusting from the stress of combat to their civilian lives; and

**WHEREAS**, Family members of National Guard and other Reserve Component Soldiers become “suddenly military families” without the cohesive supports available to families living on or near a military installation; and

**WHEREAS**, children in these families may be the only ones in a school with a deployed or recently returned relative; and

**WHEREAS**, parents, teacher, school nurses and pediatricians are first responders in the lives of children and the first adults who may be called upon to identify problems as related to deployment and return of a family member; and

**WHEREAS**, the reactions of children and youth to the deployment and return of a family member are determined in part by the child or youth’s stage of development; and

**WHEREAS**, the “SOFAR Guide for Helping Children and Youth Cope with the Deployment and Return of a Parent in the National Guard or Other Military Reserves” was written by experts on child development, on trauma in children, on school problems, and on problems of military deployment and return; and

**WHEREAS**, the “SOFAR Guide” has the endorsement of the American Academy of Pediatrics; and

**WHEREAS**, the SOFAR Guide has been distributed electronically to all schools in Massachusetts; and

**WHEREAS**, the SOFAR Guide has been distributed in hard copy to every school in North Carolina; and

**WHEREAS**, the SOFAR Guide is available for download from several Department of Defense websites, including the Defense Department Center of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury “Real Warriors, Real Battles, Real Strengths” campaign<sup>1</sup>, and U.S. Army Hooah 4 Health: Life Style Health: Hooah 4 Our Military Families<sup>2</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, As NLGA Members we have a responsibility to support and help the children of our brave National Guard and other Reserve Component Soldiers.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,**

That the National Lieutenant Governors Association supports and encourages the Department’s of Education, Mental Health, Health and Human Services, and Veteran’s Affairs in every state and territory to review the “SOFAR Guide.”

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,**

That the National Lieutenant Governors Association urges the Governors and the Education, Mental Health and Health Leadership teams in their respective states and territories to consider distributing the “SOFAR Guide” electronically or in hard copy to every school, pediatric office and facility, children’s mental health facility and military parent in their state or territory to assist in the early identification of problems in these children and youth of deployed and returned parents.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,**

That copies of this resolution be sent by the NLGA to the President of the United States, the Vice-President of the United States, the Speaker of the House and House Minority Leader, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the U.S. Senate, and that the NLGA make all state elected officials aware of passage of the resolution through a notice in StateNews magazine, and that the NLGA further post the full text of the resolution to its web page making the resolution available at all times for all NLGA members, state elected officials, and other interested parties.

Sponsored by: Lt. Governor Timothy P. Murray, (D-MA)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.realwarriors.net/guardreserve/reintegration/civilianlife.php>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hooah4health.com/4life/hooah4family/default.htm>