Dear Chairmen Inhofe and Thornberry, and Ranking Members Reed and Smith:

The undersigned military and veterans service organizations, representing millions of current and former service members and their families and survivors, writes to bring to your attention the websites Army.Com, Air-Force.com, ArmyEnlist.com, NavyEnlist.com, AirForceEnlist.com, MarinesEnlist.com, NationalGuardEnlist.com, AirGuardEnlist.com, and CoastGuardEnlist.com. The Federal Trade Commission recently shut down these websites, after finding they “targeted military recruits and induced them to submit their information by disguising their websites and advertisements as official [US military] recruiting channels and representing that the information would be used solely for [US military] recruiting purposes.”

As you know, the U.S. Army failed to make its recruitment mission this year. These pernicious websites interfered with the Armed Forces’ capacity to recruit high-quality women and men to our nation’s All-Volunteer Force, thereby undermining military personnel readiness and, ultimately, the national security. They also denied potential enlistees the opportunity to proudly wear their nation’s uniform.

Indeed, the Commission found that Army.com specifically told military recruits that the US Army did not need volunteers: “Please be aware that our military is currently downsizing. Army.com wants you to know that there are more ways for you to serve your country than just military service. If you had a college education you could contribute through engineering, science, law, health care, and more.” Because this is the exact opposite of the truth – given that the US Army is currently facing a critical shortage of volunteers – the websites’ actions are particularly damaging to military readiness.

The attached screenshots of the websites support the Commission’s findings. Patriotic young Americans visited these websites, trying to enlist in the military to serve their country, but their contact information never was given to the Armed Forces. Instead, their attempts to volunteer with the Armed Forces were re-routed to bad actor colleges that bombarded them with sales pitches to enroll in these “schools” rather than serve in the military. Moreover, potential military

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recruits were “provided the false impression that the military endorsed those schools,” as the Commission found.  

We respectfully urge you and the Members of the Armed Services Committees to direct the Department of Defense, in coordination with the Federal Trade Commission and other federal agencies, to ensure the Services’ military recruitment operations are protected from fraudulent college lead generators. We also suggest you include this matter in upcoming hearings when the Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs present their FY 2020 Budget Request.

Sincerely,

Air Force Sergeants Association

AMVETS

Army Aviation Association of America

Association of the United States Navy

Blue Star Families

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Code of Support Foundation

High Ground Veterans Advocacy

Ivy League Veterans Council

Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Military Order of the Purple Heart
Carl Bailey
Paralyzed Veterans of America

Lydia West
Service Women's Action Network

Student Veterans of America

Swords to Plowshares

Laura Leitner
The Mission Continues

Larry Madison
The Retired Enlisted Association

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors

Randy Reid
U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association & Enlisted Association
How To Join The U.S. Army

If you are interested in a career in the U.S. Army and becoming an important part of defending our Nation's security and interests abroad, the Army offers a series of benefits ranging from competitive pay and education assistance to insurance and retirement benefits. Learn the skills you need to succeed while making a difference. Follow the steps below to learn more about enlisting in the U.S. Army.

Active Duty
- Can I Join
- 7 Steps to Join
- Active Duty Requirements
- Active Duty vs. Reserve Duty

Prior Service
- Blue to Green
- Prior Service Enlistment Bonuses
- Prior Service FAQ

Reserves
- Army Reserves
- Benefits
- Requirements
- Basic Training

ROTC
- Army JROTC
- Army ROTC
- Scholarships
- ASVAB

Active Duty
- ASVAB Basics
- Active Duty Requirements
- 7 Steps to Join the Army
- Basic Training
- Delayed Entry Programs
- Military Occupation Specialties (MOS)

Reserve
- Army Reserves
- Benefits
- Requirements

How To Join The Navy

Joining the United States Navy is a great way to launch or advance your career. From the extensive job opportunities and unrivaled experience, to the exceptional benefits and generous educational assistance programs, America’s Navy can help you establish your future as a professional. And it’s one place where you can be assured that what you do makes a difference in the world. Every day.

Below are the 5 steps to joining the Navy:

Speak to a Recruiter
When you are interested in more information in regards to joining the Navy your local recruiter will be able to answer any questions you may have. Whether it is requirements to join, pay scale, benefits, or education your local recruiter will be able give you the answers.

Talk With Family and Friends
With any big decision in life it is a good idea to lean on your loved ones for advice and direction. Make sure to talk with them about the Navy, its advantages, and why joining the Navy is right for you.