

September 14, 2018

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20202

RE: Docket ID: ED-2018-OPE-0076

Dear Secretary DeVos:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Education Department's regulatory agenda for 2019.

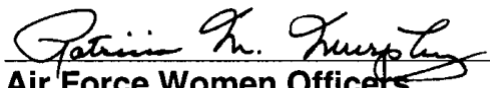
We urge the Education Department to strengthen, not discard, common-sense protections against waste, fraud, and abuse by bad actor colleges. Weakening or discarding these regulations would allow low-quality colleges to defraud servicemembers, veterans, their families and survivors – as well as taxpayers. (See Attachment 1.)

In addition, we urge the Education Department to include a veterans' and servicemembers' representative on the negotiated rulemaking panels. The voice of veterans, servicemembers, their families and survivors is a critical voice for the Education Department to hear, as it is a key student population, whose academic success America has invested in to honor their service to the nation. Further, it is important to note the majority of these students are the first in their families to attend college. Veterans, servicemembers, their families and survivors bring a helpful perspective because they are specifically targeted for deceptive and aggressive recruiting by bad actor colleges.

Sincerely,



Air Force Sergeants Association



Air Force Women Officers
Associated



AMVETS



Army Aviation Association of America



Association of the United States Navy



Ivy League Veterans Council



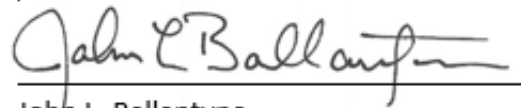
Blue Star Families



Jewish War Veterans of the USA



U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers
Association & Enlisted Association



John L. Ballantyne

Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
Military Child Education Coalition



Code of Support



Military Officers Association of America



High Ground Advocacy



Military Order of the Purple Heart



**Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans
of America**




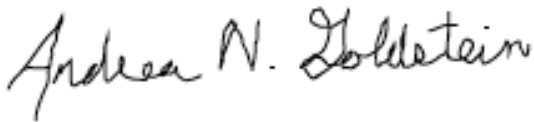
Phil Gore

Legislative Director


National Association of Veterans' Program Administrators

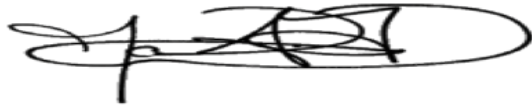

National Military Family Association


Non Commissioned Officers Assn.
of the United States of America



Service to School



Service Women's Action Network





Student Veterans of America

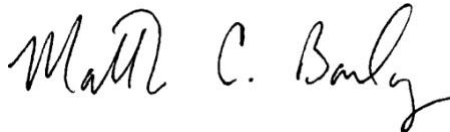


The Retired Enlisted Association

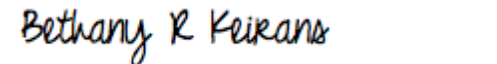

Tragedy Assistance Program for
Survivors



Veterans Education Success


Veterans for Common Sense



Veterans Student Loan Relief Fund


VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal
Association


Vietnam Veterans of America

ATTACHMENT 1: Specific Regulations

- The credit hour requirement was implemented to ensure bad actor colleges were not misrepresenting the amount of actual instruction given to students.¹ We support working with good actor colleges to best address how to properly measure meaningful instruction, while guarding against waste, fraud, and abuse. Outright repeal of the credit hour would hurt students and increase deceptive practices by schools.
- The regular and substantive requirement for interaction between instructors and students was enacted to ensure bad actor colleges do not skirt their educational duties and charge exorbitant tuition for what amounts to an online textbook or YouTube video.
- States have historically been permitted to provide vital oversight in ensuring colleges are complying with both federal and state law. Narrowing states' abilities to oversee the quality of higher education would not only allow more predatory schools to enter the marketplace, but also would strip individual states of their long-held ability to protect their citizens' right to receive quality educations.
- The requirement that higher education institutions demonstrate a reasonable relationship between the length of a program and entry-level requirements for the recognized occupation for which the student is preparing to enter is a common-sense regulation that was put in place to combat fraud from unscrupulous schools. Removing this regulation would allow schools to arbitrarily charge students for excess education that is not required in that field of study. These practices hurt the students as well as the taxpayers.
- As evidenced by recent law enforcement actions against deceptive practices by colleges, there is also a critical need for transparency in higher education. If the Department repeals the current cap on Title IV eligible colleges' outsourcing instruction, this will likely result in both students and taxpayers being confused and misled over who is actually providing the education for which they are paying and whether it is worth their tuition. Similarly, we would be concerned about the Department's embracing unaccredited religious colleges.
- We thank you for including competency-based education, which is important and helpful to servicemembers, veterans, and military families who gain valuable competencies during military service, and also relocate frequently as part of their service. We encourage more competency-based education and recognition of prior learning credits.

¹ See generally <https://ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/GEN1106.html>