

February 14, 2019

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

Thank you for your diligent work on behalf of America's veterans. We write to alert you to a continuing problem at VA and request your leadership in addressing it.

On December 3, 2018, the VA Inspector General issued a report, "[VA's Oversight of State Approving Agency Program Monitoring for Post-9/11 GI Bill Students](#)," concluding that VA will waste an estimated \$2.3 billion over the next 5 years in Post-9/11 GI Bill "improper payments to ineligible colleges," including colleges with deceptive advertising and recruiting prohibited under [38 U.S.C. § 3696](#).

The Inspector General's concerns are not new. In 2016, Yale Law School published a report, "[VA's Failure to Protect Veterans from Deceptive College Recruiting Practices](#)," specifying VA's failure to abide by 38 U.S.C. § 3696. Also in 2016, VSOs and MSOs [wrote](#) to the VA Secretary, requesting VA quickly come into compliance with 38 USC § 3696.

It appears from the Inspector General's report that VA remains out of compliance with the statute, despite numerous federal and state law enforcement actions against colleges for deceiving veterans. This has resulted in significant ramifications to VA and student veterans.

In one recent example, 49 state attorneys general – representing nearly every state in the nation – sued Career Education Corporation (CEC), following a 5-year investigation, [according](#) to the Attorneys General, "*revealed evidence demonstrating that CEC deceived prospective students about the total costs of enrollment, the transferability of credits between CEC and other institutions, the potential to obtain employment in their field, and CEC graduates' employment outcomes. As a result of these unfair and deceptive practices, students enrolled in CEC who would not have otherwise enrolled, could not obtain professional licensure, and were saddled with substantial debts that they could not repay nor discharge.*" CEC paid the highest fine to date, \$500 million, to [settle](#) the suit, without admitting guilt. CEC has the third highest number of veteran complaints brought to VA, and, in June of 2018, a CEC whistleblower flew to Washington to describe a litany of deceptive practices to VA staff. This is just one example of ineligible colleges receiving improper GI Bill payments that could be avoided with proper VA oversight.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and the Inspector General to discuss a positive solution for this ongoing challenge. We would bring positive suggestions. We look forward to your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,



Air Force Association



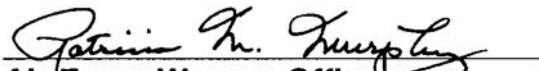
Association of the U.S. Navy



Air Force Sergeants Association



Blue Star Families



**Air Force Women Officers
Associated**



Chief Warrant and Warrant Officers, U.S.
Coast Guard



The American Legion



Fleet Reserve Association



AMVETS



High Ground Veterans Advocacy



Army Aviation Association of America



**Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans
of America**



Ivy League Veterans Council



National Military Family Association



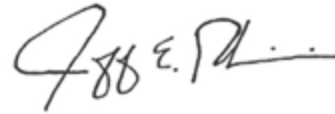
Jewish War Veterans of the USA



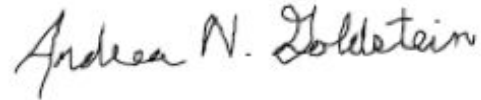
Paralyzed Veterans of America



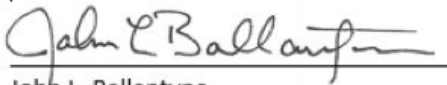
Paul K. Hopper
Col USMC (Ret)
National President
MCRA



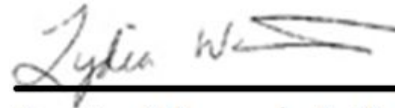
Reserve Officers Association



Service to School



John L. Ballantyne
Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
Military Child Education Coalition



Service Women's Action Network



Military Officers Association of America



Student Veterans Of America



Military Order of the Purple Heart



Swords to Plowshares

Laura Lisperance

The Mission Continues

Kath [Signature]

The Retired Enlisted Association

[Signature]

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors

Jack [Signature]

United States Army Warrant Officers Association

Randy Reid

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

csword

Veterans Education Success

Robert F. Muth

San Diego University Veterans Law Clinic

Matt C. Baulg

Veterans Student Loan Relief Fund

[Signature]

Veterans For Common Sense

Richard F. Neilman
Vietnam Veterans of America

[Signature]

VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association