



Joshua Blumm, Veteran
Testimony
U.S. Education Department
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My name is Joshua Blumm, I'm from Chico, California, and I am the son of a U.S. Marine veteran. I decided I wanted to go back to school to get my MSW in Social Work so I could work with other military families through VA.

When I was enrolling at Walden University, I made it clear to them from day one that I intended to use my father's GI Bill benefits to pay for my tuition as well as any student loan debt that I might accumulate in the process. Walden told me that I was eligible to use my father's GI Bill benefits at their school and even connected me with the Walden office that handles veteran certifications to get me signed up. Walden also encouraged me to take out student loans via FAFSA as I waited for my benefits to kick in and said that I would be reimbursed by VA at the end of my first year.

They collected all of my father's information, including his official military discharge form, and sent all of my paperwork to VA at the end of each quarter. By the time VA informed me -- over the phone -- that I was too old to use my father's GI Bill, I was several terms into my studies, I had taken out student loans, and I was too invested to start over at another school.

Walden's administrators deliberately misled me, completely pulling the wool over my eyes in order to get me to enroll. Now, I have student loan debt totaling more than \$60,000 and anger that they not only deceived me but also my father, who was only trying to help me pursue something I was passionate about. Now he feels guilty because I have all of this debt. He is also angry that we were deceived by the veterans administrators at Walden, but especially because they were supposed to be on his side -- to say the least.

I now know Walden has a history of this type of activity after I did some research on them online. That's why I'm asking you today to make sure colleges like Walden cannot get away with misleading and lying to veterans and their families. Especially the administrators in their veterans office. My father served this country honorably and this is the thanks he gets?

Thank you for your time.