



September 6, 2016

By E-Mail: [Curtis.Coy@va.gov](mailto:Curtis.Coy@va.gov)

Mr. Curtis Coy  
Deputy Undersecretary, Veterans Benefits Administration  
US Department of Veterans Affairs  
1800 G Street, NW  
Washington DC 20005

Dear Mr. Coy:

We write to request your commitment, by September 15, 2016, to provide to the US Census Bureau, by May 2017, data to enable a study of the success of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, as part of the US Census Bureau and University of Chicago's [data-linking research pilots](#).

As you know, historians and economists frequently credit the original GI Bill with helping to build America's Middle Class following WWII. In order to best serve veterans and the federal investment, policymakers need to know which are the most successful paths to civilian workforce success for veterans; they need to know "what works" under the GI Bill. No study has ever assessed Post-9/11 GI Bill users' transition into the workforce.

Your provision of data to the Census Bureau will enable researchers to assess questions including:

- What are the economic outcomes for veterans who have participated in the Post-9/11 GI Bill, as compared to eligible veterans who do not use their benefit?
- What impact has the increasing participation in the Post-9/11 GI Bill made on civilian occupational success and income among veterans?
- Which degree types, fields of study, modality of learning, and institutional type yield the greatest return on investment for veterans? Which occupations leave veterans the best off financially? Do veterans' civilian occupations correlate to their degree type and field of study, or is there a need for greater correlation between degree and occupation?
- Do spouses and dependents using the Post-9/11 GI Bill enjoy better student persistence and completion rates than veterans, perhaps suggesting the need for greater campus support for veteran students?

The expectation is to match VA data with data from the Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Internal Revenue Service, and National Student Clearinghouse to determine the

educational outcomes and civilian employment success of individuals eligible using the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The data needed at the Census Bureau by May 2017 are as follows:

(1) For all past and current Post-9/11 GI Bill students (including spouses and dependents): Name (first, middle, last), SSN, DOB, address, sex, schools attended, type of school (public, non-profit or for-profit; and whether it is primarily a 2-year or a 4-year school), dates of attendance, degree, field of study, eligibility level, GI Bill expenditures (including tuition, fees, Yellow Ribbon, payments, and housing/book stipends), and socio-demographic information (e.g., race, educational attainment) if available. Please specify if the GI Bill user was the veteran, spouse, or dependent. For any spouse or dependent user of the GI Bill, please include the personally identifiable information (name, SSN, DOB, address, and sex) of the associated veteran, so that the veteran is not counted as an eligible non-participant in the Post-9/11 GI Bill; and

(2) For all veterans eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill who did not utilize the GI Bill: Name (first, middle, last), SSN, DOB, address, sex, sociodemographic information (e.g., race, educational attainment) and military service information (e.g., ending rank, occupation, dates of service) if available. This data will be used to study the economic gains of GI Bill users as compared to those who did not use the GI Bill.

If the participation of the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) is obtained, then data needed from VA could be significantly simpler, as NSC could provide the academic information for each student. Indeed, VA already provided a subset of this data (veterans who used the Post-9/11 GI Bill at degree-granting, Title IV institutions) to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). Therefore, if NSC participation is obtained, and with VA's permission, NSC could repurpose the data VA already provided to them, such that the only new data needed from VA would be data on spouses and dependents using the Post-9/11 GI Bill; veterans eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill who did not use it and did not transfer it to their spouses or dependents; and all users of the Post-9/11 GI Bill at non-degree granting, non-Title IV institutions (to study of occupation and income of these students).

We would be grateful for your prompt commitment for this important collaboration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Schneider". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Schneider  
Vice President  
(202) 403-5510