

PRESS RELEASE:
**Congress to Restore Rapid Retraining Assistance Benefits
For Veterans of Disapproved Programs**

Two Affected Veterans Available for Media Interviews

Washington, D.C., May 19, 2022 – Last night, veterans advocates applauded [congressional action](#) to restore emergency education benefits of veterans who attended programs that were disapproved or closed. In March, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Illinois State Approving Agency (SAA) took action to cut off veterans' benefits from Future Tech Career Institute (FTCI), a school that was abusing veterans' education funds under the Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program (VRRAP). Despite the school's taking the benefits from these veterans, the veterans will have these benefits restored thanks to Senator Dick Durbin and Representatives Danny Davis, Lauren Underwood, and Mike Bost who championed this important bipartisan legislation.

Two individual veterans who had attended Future Tech and will not receive their VRRAP funding restored are available for media interviews, upon request.

“Congress created this program to help veterans during the pandemic get the skills they need to find good paying jobs. It is no surprise, given the history of the for-profit college industry that some predatory schools would try to take advantage of it. After bravely volunteering years of service to our country, our student veterans deserve better,” said [U.S. Senator Dick Durbin](#) of Illinois, the bill's original author.

“This was the right move, and Congress acted swiftly to do their part,” said **William Hubbard, Vice President of Veterans & Military Policy at Veterans Education Success.** *“After the State Approving Agency found Future Tech had committed egregious violations of student protections, they cut the program off. It was then up to Congress to make sure those veterans weren't left in the lurch, with no way to get those benefits back.”*

Illinois' [disapproval](#) has been one of the first of its kind in the nation under a new federal statute, the *Protect the GI Bill Act*, which Veterans Education Success proposed and championed, which was included in the *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020* – [unanimously](#) supported in Congress – which requires targeted examination of schools exhibiting indications of deceptive practices or failing to properly educate students. SAAs operate under the authority of VA, and are often referred to as the “watchdogs of the GI Bill.”

Illinois was one of six states that recently wrapped up a pilot program to test out a new risk-based review model to implement the new *Isakson-Roe* law – with results just recently published in a [report](#) from the National Association of State Approving Agencies, The American Legion, and EducationCounsel. That pilot tested various risk-indicators of schools that may be failing to deliver for students and taxpayers. The pilot results demonstrated that a risk-based survey model can—and does—work. Illinois' decisive action against Future Tech speaks to the success of that risk-based pilot.

BACKGROUND ON FUTURE TECH

The State approving agency (SAA) [found](#) Future Tech “engaged in substantial misrepresentations as defined by 38 USC 3696,” including:

- “FTCI misrepresented to students and potential students the availability, frequency, and appropriateness of courses of education.”

- “FTCI did not have an appropriate number of instructors available to teach the number of students enrolled.”
- “FTCI advertises students will earn 4-7 certifications through their training program. Since March 2021, only 6 students have earned [even] one certification, although there are close to 400 enrolled students during this time.”
- “FTCI pressured veterans into signing up for VRRAP, and concomitantly with Future Tech, using statements such as Time is Running out, Funds are Running Out, or that there is limited space in the program.”

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About Veterans Education Success

Veterans Education Success is a nonpartisan organization whose mission is to advance higher education success for veterans, service members, and military families, and to protect the integrity and promise of the GI Bill and other federal education programs. The organization offers free help, advice, and college and career counseling to servicemembers, veterans, and their survivors and families using federal education benefits, and helps them participate in their democracy by engaging with policymakers. Veterans Education Success also provides policy expertise to federal and state policymakers, and conducts non-partisan research on issues of concern to student veterans. Additional information is available at www.vetsedsuccess.org.