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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

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September 1, 2026

The Honorable Douglas A. Collins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Committee has a duty to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) conducts proper oversight of the institutions that partner with VA to deliver and administer education benefits for veterans, their families, and that taxpayer dollars are safeguarded on behalf of veterans, servicemembers, and their families.

A *Washington Post* article, *How predatory trade schools drained \$300 million from the GI Bill and cheated veterans*, published on August 4, 2026, reported that several trade schools have received more than \$300 million in veterans' education benefits while engaging in pricing practices that resulted in veterans being charged significantly more than non-veteran students for substantially similar programs. Even more troubling, the investigation indicated that VA and the State Approving Agencies (SAAs) were aware of some of these pricing practices and did not take action. This is precisely the kind of systematic oversight failure the Committee exists to root out.

The Committee is concerned with the SAAs lack of responsiveness to Congress. After learning about a situation occurring at George Washington University, my staff attempted to contact the Washington, D.C. SAA on three separate occasions and have yet to receive a reply. An oversight structure that will not answer basic congressional inquiries cannot be trusted to hold the institutions it is supposed to monitor accountable.

The committee is specifically concerned in VA's and the relevant SAAs oversight at the following institutions:

1. NTI Organic Lawn Care Institute
2. StoneMakers Academy
3. The Retail Ready Career Center

To assist the committee in its oversight responsibilities, please provide responses to the following questions no later than September 15, 2026.

1. Which institutions listed above were previously approved to receive Post-9/11 GI Bill funds?
2. If so, provide us with the date that each institution was no longer eligible to receive GI Bill funds.
3. Has VA reached out or does VA plan to directly contact veterans and beneficiaries who enrolled at these institutions?
4. Has VA referred, or does it intend to refer, any of these matters to the VA Office of Inspector General, the Department of Justice, or any other federal or state law enforcement or oversight entity? If so, please identify the referrals and their status.
5. What actions are VA taking to ensure similar pricing practices are identified and addressed at other educational institutions participating in VA education benefit programs?
6. What processes does VA currently use to evaluate the performance of State Approving Agencies (SAAs) in carrying out their oversight responsibilities over institutions participating in VA education benefit programs?
7. Has VA conducted any reviews, audits, quality assurance assessments, or performance evaluations of the SAAs responsible for overseeing NTI Organic Lawn Care Institute, StoneMakers Academy, and The Retail Ready Career Center? If so, please provide the results of those reviews.
8. Does VA believe additional statutory authorities are needed to strengthen oversight of State Approving Agencies or institutions participating in the GI Bill program? If so, please identify those authorities and explain why they are necessary.
9. How will VA strengthen quality assurance and ensure effective oversight over the GI Bill going forward?
10. The Committee also requests a complete review by VA of all contracts and agreements that SAAs have, along with the Joint Peer Review Assessments.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue on behalf of the veterans we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Bost", with a stylized flourish at the end.

MIKE BOST
Chairman

Cc: The Honorable Mark Takano, Ranking Member
Mr. David Salgado, President, National Association of State Approving Agencies