



STUDENT VETERANS *of* AMERICA

Things to Know About the “Forever GI Bill”

A Section-By-Section Analysis of this Groundbreaking Legislation

August 2017

SUMMARY

Student veterans are among the most successful students in higher education today. Based on our research, the *National Veteran Education Success Tracker* (NVEST), we demonstrate that the investment our country is making in the education of veterans has an incredible impact on veterans, their families, and our country. This presentation provides analysis of the nearly 30 provisions that will have a direct impact on millions of people; the legislation reflects so many essential solution-oriented provisions that increase access to education, address the inequities of this earned benefit and look forward to the future well beyond our own generation. The bill's passage represents a new era for education for veterans—one where we no longer consider the GI Bill as a “cost of war”, but more powerfully, a right of service. This legislation has been referred to as one of the most bipartisan pieces of legislation ever to pass through congress, both in co-sponsorship and votes, as well as formulation and negotiated text. The snapshots of each section are not necessarily comprehensive, but the language can be read in-full on congress.gov. A special thanks to the following organizations who worked closely with the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees to help make the passage of this bill a reality: Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, Vietnam Veterans of America, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, Got Your 6, and the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017

Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 is named after the original architect of the first GI Bill, which is often considered to be one of the most transformative pieces of legislation in the United States. Similarly, today's GI Bill, to be known hereafter as the "Colmery GI Bill", pays homage to this great American, and seeks to achieve even greater impact on the country.

Considered the principal architect of the GI Bill, Colmery was a Kansas attorney, and served during World War I as an Army Air Service pilot. Colmery was a member of the American Legion, and determined—based upon his personal experiences of leaving the service with little help in planning his future—to improve the transition for World War II veterans.



Holed up in Washington's Mayflower Hotel for five months, Colmery hand-wrote page after page of the GI Bill of 1944, which granted war veterans an array of rights and later served as a pattern for programs to aid Korean War and Vietnam War veterans.

In the spirit of creating a better future for the next generation of veterans, with the opportunity to go to school as a right of service, this GI Bill is rightfully named after Harry W. Colmery.

TITLE I—POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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This adds time spent on active duty under orders authorized by section 12301(h) of title 10, U.S.C., as qualifying time for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. These particular orders are used when a National Guardsman or Reservist is receiving medical care or is recovering from active duty injuries.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to National Guard members Reservists who were activated on or after September 11, 2001.

DID YOU KNOW?

Time spent in recovery due to battlefield injuries will count towards GI Bill eligibility due to #ForeverGIBill

SEC. 101. CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN TIME SPENT RECEIVING MEDICAL CARE FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AS ACTIVE DUTY FOR PURPOSES OF ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3301(1)(B) is amended by inserting “12301(h),” after “12301(g),”.

(b) **RETROACTIVE APPLICATION.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to service in the Armed Forces occurring on or after September 11, 2001.

(c) **APPLICATION WITH RESPECT TO USE OF ENTITLEMENT.**—An individual who is entitled to educational

This section extends full eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill to any Purple Heart recipients since September 11, 2001. Many reservists who were injured while activated don't meet the full requirement for active duty time, and are not entitled to full GI Bill.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to Purple Heart recipients awarded on or after September 11, 2001.

DID YOU KNOW?

There's approximately 1,500 Purple Heart recipients that will become eligible for the full GI Bill due the #ForeverGIBill

Learn more from our partner, the [Military Order of the Purple Heart](#)

SEC. 102. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AWARDED THE PURPLE HEART.

(a) **ELIGIBILITY.**—Section 3311(b) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(10) An individual who is awarded the Purple Heart for service in the Armed Forces occurring on or after September 11, 2001, and continues to serve on active duty in the Armed Forces or is discharged or released from active duty as described in subsection (c).”.

(b) **AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.**—Section 3313(c)(1) is amended by striking “or (9)” and inserting “(9), or (10)”.

This section extends the Yellow Ribbon Program to students receiving GI Bill payments through the Fry Scholarship program and those who received a Purple Heart after September 11, 2001.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to Purple Heart recipients and Fry Scholarship recipients receiving GI Bill payments through the Fry Scholarship program after September 11, 2001.

DID YOU KNOW?

Before the #ForeverGIBill, children that lost a parent in the line of duty did not have access to the Yellow Ribbon program.

SEC. 103. INCLUSION OF FRY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS AND PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS IN YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3317(a) is amended, in the second sentence, by striking “paragraphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (1), (2), (9), and (10)”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on August 1, 2018.

This section extends the breadth of the Yellow Ribbon program to student veterans enrolled in programs of education leading to a degree on more than a half-time basis or while on active duty.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2022 and applies to student veterans enrolled on more than a half-time basis or while on active duty.

**SEC. 104. INCLUSION OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE
ARMED FORCES SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY
IN YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION EN-
HANCEMENT PROGRAM.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3317(a) is amended, in the first sentence, by striking “section 3313(c)(1)(A)” and inserting “subsection (c)(1)(A) or (e)(2)(A) of section 3313 of this title”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on August 1, 2022.

10% Increases For Reservists at 40%, 50% Eligibility

This section authorizes additional GI Bill funding for members of the National Guard and Reserve. This section increases the amount of money/eligibility that individuals receive who serve at least 90 days but less than 6 months on active duty – it increases from 40% to 50% benefit payable. It also increases the amount of money/eligibility that individuals receive who serve at least 6 months but less than 12 months – it increases from 50% to 60% benefit payable, resulting in up to \$2300 more a year in tuition.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2020 and applies to National Guard members and Reservists who's service commenced on or after September 11, 2001.

SEC. 105. CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN ELIGIBILITY TIERS UNDER POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET- ERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **ENTITLEMENT.**—Section 3311(b), as amended by section 102, is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (6)(A), by striking “12 months” and inserting “6 months”;

(2) by striking paragraph (7); and

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (8), (9), and (10) as paragraphs (7), (8), and (9), respectively.

(b) **AMOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.**—Section 3313(c) is amended by striking paragraph (7).

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Chapter 33 is fur-

This section allows certain members of the Reserve component to transfer into the Post-9/11 GI Bill who lost educational assistance benefits when Congress repealed the Reserve Educational Assistant Program (REAP).

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to National Guard members and Reservists who lost REAP benefits on November 25, 2015.

DID YOU KNOW?

Education benefits were pulled unexpectedly from Reservists and National Guard members in 2015. Thanks to #ForeverGIBill, these benefits will be reimplemented.

SEC. 106. ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF RESERVE COMPONENTS OF ARMED FORCES WHO LOST ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER RESERVE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) ELECTION.—Section 16167 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—A member who loses eligibility for benefits under this chapter pursuant to subsection (b) shall be allowed to elect (in such form and manner as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may prescribe) to have such service

This section changes the way living stipend amounts are calculated, from the current rule that says the living stipend payment is based on where the school is located to instead having the payment calculated based on where the student attends the majority of their classes.

This provision takes effect on or after August 1, 2018 and applies to students who are initially enrolling in an educational program.

DID YOU KNOW?

Thanks to #ForeverGIBill, a student taking online classes will be rightfully compensated for their cost of living.

SEC. 107. CALCULATION OF MONTHLY HOUSING STIPEND UNDER POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BASED ON LOCATION OF CAMPUS WHERE CLASSES ARE ATTENDED.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3313(c)(1)(B)(i)(I) is amended by striking “the institution of higher learning at which the individual is enrolled” and inserting “the campus of the institution of higher learning where the individual physically participates in a majority of classes”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to initial enrollment in a program of education on or after August 1, 2018.

Pro-Rated Benefits to Take Certification or Licensure Tests

This section changes the current rules that require that a veteran be charged a whole month of entitlement to pay for any national test (GMAT, GRE, SAT etc.) or test that is required for state licensing. Instead of a full month of entitlement this section requires that the test be pro-rated to the amount of the actual cost of the test.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to all individuals utilizing current GI Bill educational benefits interested in taking licensure, certification, or national tests.

SEC. 108. CHARGE TO ENTITLEMENT FOR CERTAIN LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION TESTS AND NATIONAL TESTS UNDER DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) **LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION TESTS.**—Subsection (c) of section 3315 is amended—

(1) by striking “shall be determined at the rate of one month (rounded to the nearest whole month)” and inserting “shall be pro-rated based on the actual amount of the fee charged for the test relative to the rate for one month”; and

(2) by striking “for each amount paid that equals” and inserting “payable”.

This section restores GI Bill benefits wasted at schools that unexpectedly closed, and continues educational assistance payments for veterans who were disapproved or who would not have the term during which their studies were interrupted count toward the aggregate of their GI Bill entitlement. Under this section, veterans also continue receiving monthly education assistance payments, through the end of the term, quarter, or semester in which the school closes, or for up to 120 days from the date of the school closure, whichever is less.

This provision takes effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and applies to closures after January 1, 2015.

SEC. 109. RESTORATION OF ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER RELIEF FOR VETERANS AFFECTED BY SCHOOL CLOSURE OR DISAPPROVAL.

(a) SCHOOL CLOSURE OR DISAPPROVAL.—

(1) RESTORATION OF ENTITLEMENT.—Chapter 36 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3699. Effects of closure or disapproval of educational institution

“(a) CLOSURE OR DISAPPROVAL.—Any payment of educational assistance described in subsection (b) shall not—

“(1) be charged against any entitlement to edu-

This section allows a veteran to transfer remaining months of GI Bill entitlement to another dependent if the dependent who originally received the transferred benefits dies before they can use all of the benefits. The section also allows a dependent to transfer remaining months of GI Bill entitlement to another dependent after the death of the servicemember or veteran.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies, with respect, to deaths on or after August 1, 2009.

**SEC. 110. ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZED TRANSFER OF UNUSED
POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE BENE-
FITS TO DEPENDENTS UPON DEATH OF
ORIGINALLY DESIGNATED DEPENDENT.**

(a) **TRANSFER UPON DEATH OF DEPENDENT.**—Sec-
tion 3319 is amended—

(1) in subsection (f)(1), by inserting after “sec-
tion 3321” the following: “, and except as provided
in subsection (k) or (l),”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
section:

“(k) **ADDITIONAL TRANSFER UPON DEATH OF DE-
PENDENT.**—In the case of a dependent to whom entitle-
ment to educational assistance is transferred under this

This section authorizes VA to provide a scholarship to provide additional GI Bill funds to help a student veteran complete a STEM degree. Certain eligible students will be eligible to apply for the program if they are at least half way through a STEM degree and expect their GI Bill benefits to be exhausted before completing their program. The scholarship pays for nine additional months of the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit, up to a maximum payment of \$30,000.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2019 and applies to student veterans pursuing STEM degree.

Learn more from our partner, the [STEM Education Coalition](#)

SEC. 111. EDITH NOURSE ROGERS STEM SCHOLARSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 33 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3320. Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the limitation under subsection (f), the Secretary shall provide additional benefits to eligible individuals selected by the Secretary under this section. Such benefits shall be known as the ‘Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship’.

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—For purposes of this section, an eligible individual is an individual—

“(1) who is or was entitled to educational assistance under section 3311 of this title;

“(2) who has used all of the educational assist-

Termination of Arbitrary 15-Year Time Limit

This section eliminates the current 15 year time limitation to use the GI Bill for new members of the Armed Forces.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to service members and dependents discharged on or after January 1, 2013.

DID YOU KNOW?

Thanks to the #ForeverGIBill, the government will no longer tell veterans how to use their benefits #RightofService!

Learn more from our partner, [Vietnam Veterans of America](#), and the importance of their founding principle, “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another”

SEC. 112. HONORING THE NATIONAL SERVICE OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES BY ELIMINATION OF TIME LIMITATION FOR USE OF ENTITLEMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (a) of section 3321 is amended—

(1) by striking “individual’s entitlement” and all that follows through the period and inserting “individual’s entitlement—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(1) in the case of an individual whose last discharge or release from active duty is before January, 1, 2013, expires at the end of the 15-year period be-

Pro-Rated Housing Allowance for Activations

This section requires VA to pro-rate the GI Bill housing stipend provided to Reservists who get called up for active duty during the middle of a month. Current law prohibits them from pro-rating the stipend so if the reservist is on active duty orders for even one day of a month then they would lose the entire month's worth of VA housing allowance.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to members of the Reserve component of the Armed Forces pursuing an educational program using current GI Bill educational benefits.

SEC. 113. MONTHLY STIPEND FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES RECEIVING POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3313 is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) **DETERMINATION OF MONTHLY STIPENDS DURING CERTAIN ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE.**—

“(1) **PRO RATA BASIS.**—In any month in which an individual described in paragraph (2) is performing active duty service described in section 3301(1)(B) of this title, the Secretary shall determine the amount of monthly stipends payable under this section for such month on a pro rata basis for

Requirement for Reports on GI Bill Program



This section requires the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs to submit reports from educational institutions regarding student performance to congress no later than March 1 of each year.

This provision takes effect immediately applies to individuals utilizing current GI Bill educational benefits.

SEC. 114. ANNUAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON INFORMATION ON STUDENT PROGRESS SUBMITTED BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Section 3326 is amended—

(1) by striking “As a condition” and inserting “(a) SUBMITTAL OF INFORMATION BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.—As a condition”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than March 1 of each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that includes a summary of the information provided by educational institutions under subsection (a) for the calendar year preceding the year during which such

This section authorizes \$30 million to improve GI Bill claims processing and complete their rules-based processing system for these claims.

This provision takes effect during fiscal years 2018 and 2019, and applies to all veterans.

**SEC. 115. IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
OF THE VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS.**

(a) **PROCESSING OF CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CLAIMS.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the maximum extent possible, make such changes and improvements to the information technology system of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that—

(1) to the maximum extent possible, all original and supplemental claims for educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, are adjudicated electronically; and

This section authorizes VA to conduct a 5-year pilot program that provides veterans the opportunity to enroll in high technology courses (coding boot camp, IT certifications etc.). VA will enter into contracts with these schools or programs and provides tuition and fees payments on a sliding scale that incentivizes the schools to graduate the student and ensure they find a job in their field of study.

This provision takes effect no later than 180 days after August 1, 2018 and applies to eligible veterans interested in enrolling in high technology programs.

We thank Leader Kevin McCarthy for championing this provision.

SEC. 116. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HIGH TECHNOLOGY PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) **PILOT PROGRAM.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program under which the Secretary shall provide eligible veterans with the opportunity to enroll in high technology programs of education that the Secretary determines provide training or skills sought by employers in a relevant field or industry.

(b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—For purposes of the pilot program under this section, an eligible veteran is a veteran who is entitled to educational assistance under chapter 30, 32, 33, 34, or 35 of title 38, United States Code, or chapter 1606 or 1607 of title 10, United States Code.

TITLE II—OTHER EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

STUDENT VETERANS *of* AMERICA

Extension of VA's Work-Study Program



This section repeals the sunset date in the law that allows VA work study benefits for outreach to student veterans and to assist State Approving Agencies.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to veterans pursuing VA's work-study program.

SEC. 201. WORK-STUDY ALLOWANCE.

Section 3485(a)(4) is amended by striking “the period beginning on June 30, 2017, and ending on June 30, 2022,” each place it appears and inserting “any time on or after June 30, 2017,”.

This section changes the number of months of entitlement for individuals who become eligible for the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program from 45 months to 36 months. This realigns this program with other GI Bill programs that provide 36 months of eligibility for educational assistance.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to survivors who become eligible after that date.

SEC. 202. DURATION OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDU- CATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 3511(a)(1) is amended—

(1) by striking “chapter for” and all that follows through the period and inserting “chapter—”;
and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(A) in the case of a person who first enrolls in a program of education using such entitlement before August 1, 2018, for an aggregate period not in excess of 45 months (or to the equivalent thereof in part-time training); or

This section increases the monthly payment for educational assistance provided under Survivors' and Dependent' Educational Assistance Program (DEA) by \$200 a month.

This provision takes effect October 1, 2018 and applies to all survivors eligible for DEA benefits.

SEC. 203. OLIN E. TEAGUE INCREASE IN AMOUNTS OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PAYABLE UNDER SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) INCREASE.—Section 3532 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “\$788” and inserting “\$1,224”;

(ii) by striking “\$592” and inserting “\$967”; and

(iii) by striking “\$394” and inserting “\$710”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking

TITLE III—ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

STUDENT VETERANS *of* AMERICA

Increased State Approving Agency (SAA) Funding

This section increases the funding out of VA's mandatory re-adjustment account for SAAs from \$19 million a year to \$21 million for fiscal year 2018 and to \$23 million a year for each subsequent fiscal year. This section also authorizes VA to provide an additional \$3 million in appropriations a year to the SAAs out of the Department's general operating account.

This provision takes effect in fiscal year 2019 and applies to SAAs.

Learn more from our partner, the [National Association of State Approving Agencies](#)

SEC. 301. STATE APPROVING AGENCY FUNDING.

(a) INCREASE.—Section 3674(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking “out of amounts available for the payment of readjustment benefits” and inserting “out of amounts in the Department of Veterans Affairs readjustment benefits account and amounts appropriated to the Secretary”;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5);

This section allows an eligible individual to use their GI Bill benefit for an accredited independent study program (including open circuit television) at an educational institution that is an area career and technical education school or a postsecondary vocational school providing postsecondary level education.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to all individuals currently utilizing GI Bill educational benefits.

SEC. 302. AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO PURSUE INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAMS AT CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THAT ARE NOT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING.

Section 3680A is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “in—” and inserting “in any of the following:”;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “any” and inserting “Any”; and

(ii) by striking the semicolon at the

This section requires VA to include on its GI Bill Comparison Tool, information on whether a school has a priority enrollment system in place that allows veterans to enroll in courses earlier than other students attending the school.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to student veterans pursuing institutions of higher learning.

SEC. 303. PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON PRIORITY ENROLLMENT FOR VETERANS IN CERTAIN COURSES OF EDUCATION.

Section 3698(c)(1)(C) is amended—

- (1) in clause (ix), by striking “and” at the end;
- (2) in clause (x), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and
- (3) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(xi) information on whether the institution administers a priority enrollment system that allows certain student veterans to enroll in courses earlier than other students.”.

School Certifying Officials (SCO) Funding and Requirements



This section allows VA to provide a fee to schools or a sponsor of a program of apprenticeship for the reports or certifications that these institutions are required to submit to VA about the individuals at their school receiving GI Bill benefits. This section increases the fee provided to institutions for each individual that they certify as using GI Bill benefits up to \$16 per veteran. This section also requires schools with 100 or more enrollees using GI Bill benefits, to establish a specific account tracking the fees. All fees will be required to be used specifically for implementation of the GI Bill.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to all individuals utilizing GI Bill educational benefits.

SEC. 304. LIMITATION ON USE OF REPORTING FEES PAYABLE TO EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND SPONSORS OF PROGRAMS OF APPRENTICESHIP.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (c) of section 3684 is amended to read as follows:

“(c)(1) The Secretary may pay to any educational institution, or to the sponsor of a program of apprenticeship, furnishing education or training under either this chapter or chapter 31, 34, or 35 of this title, a reporting fee which will be in lieu of any other compensation or reimbursement for reports or certifications which such educational institution or sponsor of a program of apprenticeship is required

This section requires VA, in consultation with the SAA's, to provide requirements for training for school certifying officials at educational institutions that are approved for GI Bill benefits. This section also allows VA to disapprove a course of education if a school does not ensure that the school certifying official meets the training requirements.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to school certifying officials.

SEC. 305. TRAINING FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS.

(a) **TRAINING REQUIREMENT.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the State approving agencies, set forth requirements relating to training for school certifying officials employed by covered educational institutions offering courses of education approved under chapter 36 of title 38, United States Code. If a covered educational institution does not ensure that a school certifying official employed by the educational institution meets such requirements, the Secretary may disapprove any course of education offered by such educational institution.

(b) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term “covered educational institution”

Continuation of VA Advisory Committee on Education (VACOE)



This section extends the authority for VA's Advisory Committee on Education from December of 2017 through to December of 2022.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to the VA's Advisory Committee on Education.

SEC. 306. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

Section 3692 is amended by striking “December 31, 2017” and inserting “December 31, 2022”.

Codification of Vet Success on Campus (VSOC)



This section codifies VA's Veterans Success on Campus (VSOC) program, which is administered and overseen by the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service (VS&E). There are currently 94 schools with a VSOC program, which provides a VR&E counselor at each school to assist veterans with their transition from military to college life as well as who provide the support and assistance needed to pursue their educational and employment goals.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to student veterans.

SEC. 307. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROVISION OF ON-CAMPUS EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELING FOR VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 36 is amended by inserting after section 3697A the following new section:

“§ 3697B. On-campus educational and vocational counseling

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall provide educational and vocational counseling services for individuals described in section 3697A(b) of this title at locations on the campuses of institutions of higher learning selected by the Secretary. Such counseling services shall be provided by employees of the Department who provide such services under section 3697A of this title.

This section requires VA to make available to educational institutions, the ability to view the remaining benefit amount for each veteran attending that institution. This section also provides the option for the veteran to opt-out of participation if they prefer that the school does not have access to this information.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to all individuals currently utilizing GI Bill educational benefits.

SEC. 308. PROVISION OF INFORMATION REGARDING VETERAN ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 36 is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3699A. Provision of certain information to educational institutions

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—For each veteran or other individual pursuing a course of education that has been approved under this chapter using educational assistance to which the veteran or other individual is entitled under chapter 30, 32, 33, or 35 of this title, the Secretary shall make available to the educational institution offering the

Incorporating Delayed-Start Programs Into Regular Schedule

This section provides more flexibility to the school certifying officials if the first day of a course does not start on the first day of an academic term, by allowing the school certifying official to certify the course as beginning on that day first day of the academic term for purposes of certifying a veteran for GI Bill benefits.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to all individuals currently utilizing GI Bill educational benefits.

SEC. 309. TREATMENT, FOR PURPOSES OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, OF EDUCATIONAL COURSES THAT BEGIN SEVEN OR FEWER DAYS AFTER THE FIRST DAY OF AN ACADEMIC TERM.

Section 3684(a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph (4):

“(4) A course offered by an educational institution that does not begin on the first day of an academic term,

This section directs SAAs to focus the majority of their resources on conducting risk-based surveys and oversight measures, in addition to compliance duties. This change allows SAAs to focus limited resources on targeted implementation of oversight in a much more effective manner.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies SAAs.

SEC. 310. INCLUSION OF RISK-BASED SURVEYS IN STATE APPROVING AGENCY OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES.

Section 3673(d) is amended—

- (1) in the subsection heading, by striking “COMPLIANCE AND” ;
- (2) by striking “such compliance and oversight” and inserting “conducting risk-based surveys and other such oversight”; and
- (3) by inserting “, in consultation with the State approving agencies,” after “as the Secretary”.

This section requires the Comptroller General of the United States to carry out a study analyzing the effectiveness and performance of SAAs.

This provision takes effect within the first year, contingent upon the completion of the report within one year of enactment, and applies to the Comptroller General of the United States.

SEC. 311. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY OF STATE APPROVING AGENCY PERFORMANCE.

(a) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall carry out a study on the performance of State approving agencies. Such study shall include each of the following:

(1) An analysis of the effectiveness of the cooperation between the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and State approving agencies regarding the execution of shared compliance and oversight responsibilities under chapter 36 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) An analysis of the resources necessary for State approving agencies to fulfill the responsibilities

TITLE IV—RESERVE COMPONENT BENEFITS

STUDENT VETERANS *of* AMERICA

12304(b) Reservist Order Equity for GI Bill

This section makes individuals eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits who have served and who will serve on 12304, 12304(a) and 12304(b) orders. Any active duty service under these Reserve component orders since the enactment of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 can apply for such benefits going forward.

This provision takes effect August 1, 2018 and applies to National Guard members and Reservists who have received 12304(b) orders after June 30, 2008.

DID YOU KNOW?

Until the #ForeverGIBill, Reservists and National Guard members served alongside active duty service members but did not receive the same benefits.

SEC. 401. ELIGIBILITY OF RESERVE COMPONENT MEMBERS

FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3301(1)(B) is amended by striking “or 12304” and inserting “12304, 12304a, or 12304b”.

(b) **RETROACTIVE APPLICATION.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to service in the Armed Forces occurring on or after the date of the enactment of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–252).

(c) **APPLICATION WITH RESPECT TO USE OF ENTITLEMENT.**—An individual who is entitled to educational assistance by reason of the amendment made by subsection (a) may use such entitlement to pursue a course

12304(b) Reservist Order Equity for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR&E)



This section allows veterans who are receiving Vocational Rehab (VR&E) benefits, to “pause” their eligibility so their time under the VR&E program is not negatively affected while called up for 12304(a) and 12304(b) active duty orders.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to National Guard members and Reservists with service connected disabilities.

SEC. 402. TIME LIMITATION FOR TRAINING AND REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

Section 3103(f) is amended by striking “or 12304” and inserting “12304, 12304a, or 12304b”.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

STUDENT VETERANS *of* AMERICA

This section is the offset for the package, realigning the living stipend payments for those using the Post 9/11 GI Bill (E-5 with dependents rate) to the same Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) payments currently paid to active duty servicemembers at the E-5 with dependents rate. Several years ago, the annual percentage increase to active duty BAH payments were reduced by 1% a year for five years but GI bill payments were exempt. This section aligns these payments so that a GI Bill recipient will get the same allowance as an E-5 active duty servicemember with dependents.

This provision takes effect January 1, 2018 and applies to individuals utilizing GI Bill educational benefits after January 1, 2018.

**SEC. 501. REPEAL INAPPLICABILITY OF MODIFICATION OF
BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING TO BENE-
FITS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY SEC-
RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

(a) **REPEAL.**—Subsection (b) of section 604 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291; 37 U.S.C. 403 note) is repealed.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on January 1, 2018, and shall apply with respect to individuals who first use their entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, on or after such date.

Restitution for WWII Mustard Gas Exposures



This section will require the Secretary of Defense to investigate sites of mustard gas exposures during WWII, 180 days after enactment of this Act, and submit findings to congress and the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs.

This provision takes effect immediately and applies to veterans exposed to mustard gas during WWII.

SEC. 502. RECONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUSLY DENIED CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR VETERANS WHO ALLEGE FULL-BODY EXPOSURE TO NITROGEN MUSTARD GAS, SULFUR MUSTARD GAS, OR LEWISITE DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) RECONSIDERATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall reconsider all claims for compensation described in paragraph (2) and make a new determination regarding each such claim.

(2) CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION DESCRIBED.—

Coverage



AP

[House To Act Quickly on Bipartisan Measure to Expand GI Bill](#)



Dr. David J. Shulkin  @SecShulkin · Jul 17

Thanks to the work of @studentvets and others, the #ForeverGIBill would strengthen an important benefit used by many & help our #Veterans

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The Washington Post

[New GI Bill unanimously passes House, heads to Senate](#)



[Expanded 'Forever' GI Bill poised for quick action in Congress](#)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

[Plan to Expand G.I. Bill Benefits Moves to a Fast Track](#)

Military Times

[No expiration date for 'beefed up' GI Bill benefits under new proposal](#)

TASK & PURPOSE

[A New Lifetime GI Bill Is Likely To Become Law. Here's How It Will Impact Vets](#)

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STUDENT VETERANS
of AMERICA



APPENDIX

STUDENT VETERANS *of* AMERICA

What to Know About the #ForeverGIBill

securing one of our greatest national assets for generations to come

Student veterans are among the most successful students in higher education today. Based on research from Student Veterans of America, the [National Veteran Education Success Tracker](#) (NVEST), it's clear that the investment our country is making in the education of veterans has an incredible impact on veterans, their families, and the country. The bill's passage represents a new era for education for veterans—one where we no longer consider the GI Bill as a “cost of war”, but more powerfully, a right of service. Among the many provisions, the bill achieves the following improvements and expansions of the GI Bill:

- Ends 15-year limit on GI Bill usage, allowing all veterans who exited service in 2013 or after go to school anytime;
- Provides GI Bill eligibility for reservists mobilized under selected reserve orders for preplanned missions in support of the combatant commands or in response to a major disaster or emergency (12304b, 12301h, 12301g);
- Provides GI Bill eligibility for reservists undergoing medical care;
- Provides full GI Bill benefits for Purple Heart recipients regardless of length of service;
- Extends Yellow Ribbon Program benefits to Fry scholarship recipients;
- Restores used GI Bill benefits to students who experience permanent school closures while enrolled;
- Increases GI Bill payments by \$2,300 per year for veterans with less than 12 months of active service;
- Creates pilot program for high-technology and computer programming courses;
- Expands education benefits for veterans pursuing science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) degrees;
- Increases amount of fees paid to schools for certification of student veteran enrollments;
- Improves GI Bill information technology system to fully automate claims;
- Increases monthly amount of educational assistance for survivors and dependents of disabled veterans;
- Increases funding for state-approving agencies to conduct oversight of schools; and
- Allows GI Bill use for distance courses in technical and career education institutions.

A Special Thanks to the Organizations that Led the Way:

