

The Weekly Report

August 13, 2021

The latest news, views, and announcements

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National Veterans Employment & Education Division



VE&E's Latest News Story See What's New Today:



*American Legion to have presence at
New Jersey air show*

A SALUTE TO THOSE WHO SERVE

August 18, 2021 | ATLANTIC CITY, NJ
Tentative Start Time: 11:30 AM

[For More Information Click Here](#)

“Veterans Row”, as part of the AC Air Show, afforded our veterans and family attendees, the opportunity to visit, learn and discuss every benefit they have earned as a result of their military service, and in one location! Over 1,500 vets visited the 13 service providers and the distribution of 2,000+ benefit brochures. The all-inclusive services and benefits included the VA with GI Bill, medical, service connection disability, Agent Orange, Gulf War Syndrome, homelessness, benefit registration and upgrades, Veteran Justice Outreach support; Crisis and Homeless hotline agencies; the DAV, American Legion and VFW, the 3 major national veteran service organizations (VSO's) who facilitate all earned benefits, as well as membership and legislative initiatives.

Bob Looby, chairman of the Department of New Jersey's Employment, Homeless and Education Committee and past department commander, said The American Legion has a great time interacting with thousands of veterans, their families and non-veterans “interested in who we are.” The 2020 air show was cancelled because of COVID, however, during the 2019 air show Looby said they signed up 39 new members into The American Legion.



SENATE PASSES \$3.5 TRILLION BUDGET PLAN, ADVANCING SAFETY NET EXPANSION

The blueprint, which would expand health care, provide free preschool and community college, and fund climate change programs, passed along party lines and faces an arduous path ahead.

The Senate took a major step on Wednesday toward enacting a vast expansion of the nation's social safety net, approving a \$3.5 trillion budget blueprint along party lines that would allow Democrats to tackle climate change and fund health care, child care, family leave and public education expansion.

Much of that spending would be paid for with higher taxes on wealthy people and corporations.

After the Senate gave bipartisan approval to a \$1 trillion infrastructure package on Tuesday, the budget vote came over unanimous Republican opposition. If House Democrats follow suit later this month, congressional Democrats this fall hope to draft an expansive package that will carry

the remainder of President Biden's \$4 trillion economic agenda. The Senate adopted the measure 50 to 49, minutes before 4 a.m.

The blueprint sets in motion a perilous legislative process aimed at creating the largest expansion of the federal safety net in nearly six decades. The House will return early from its scheduled summer recess the week of Aug. 23 to take up the budget, so committees in both chambers can begin work fleshing out the party's vision for what would be the greatest change to social welfare since the 1960s' Great Society.

Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader, said on Wednesday that he hoped

to have the legislation completed by the week of Sept. 15. But no one was declaring victory.

Democratic unity this week could belie difficulties ahead. Senators Joe Manchin III of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, the Senate's most vocal moderate Democrats, said they voted for the budget blueprint to keep to process moving, but they may not support the expansive legislation that the budget vote protects from a Republican filibuster.

Mr. Manchin released a statement on Wednesday that raised "serious concerns about the grave consequences facing West Virginians and every American family if Congress decides to spend another \$3.5 trillion."

At the White House, Mr. Biden defended the social spending package against criticism that it would fuel inflation.

"If your primary concern right now is the cost of living, you should support this plan, not oppose it," he said. "A vote against this plan is a vote against lowering the cost of health care, housing, child care, elder care and prescription drugs for American families."

Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California has just a three-vote margin in the House, and a half dozen moderates are considering whether to oppose the blueprint unless they get a scheduled vote on the Senate-passed infrastructure bill — to claim a quick victory and a White House bill-signing ceremony.

"When you've got a bill that will create two million jobs a year, with the support of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the Chamber of Commerce, all coming together with Democrats and Republicans and, by the way, the president, why would we not bring this to a vote and get it done immediately?" asked Representative Josh Gottheimer, Democrat of New Jersey. "Of course we will be pushing hard."

Ms. Pelosi told House Democrats on Wednesday in a private call that she would not take up the bill before the Senate passed the second, larger package.

"I am not freelancing — this is the consensus," Ms. Pelosi told Democrats, according to two people familiar with the discussion, who disclosed the comments on the condition of anonymity. "The votes in the House and Senate depend on us having both bills."

That stance reflects the views of House liberals, who fear that if the infrastructure bill is signed into law, moderate Democrats will declare victory and withdraw support for the liberals' priority bill.

With two significant bills in play, the fight over timing is growing fierce — and public.

"Now that the Senate approved the bipartisan infrastructure bill, the House must pass it ASAP,"

Representative Stephanie Murphy, Democrat of Florida and a leader of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition, wrote on Twitter. "While I support passing a targeted reconciliation bill to help FL families, we shouldn't hold infrastructure hostage to it."

Representative Jared Huffman, Democrat of California, quickly responded, "Respectfully, no."

In the Senate, the budget blueprint's passage came after a marathon session. Republicans, powerless to stop the measure in a Senate that Democrats control with Vice President Kamala Harris's tiebreaking vote, pelted Democrats with politically freighted amendments. The votes dragged on for more than 14 hours before Democrats muscled through the measure, breaking into scattered applause.

"This legislation will not only provide enormous support to the kids of this country, to the parents of this country, to the elderly people of this

"This was one of the most significant legislative days we've had in a long time here in the United States Senate, but we still have a long road to travel," Mr. Schumer said at a news conference. "We've labored for months and months to reach this point, and we have no illusions — maybe the hardest work is yet to come."

country,” said Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, the independent in charge of the Budget Committee. “But it will also, I hope, restore the belief that in America we can have a government that works for all, not just the few.”

Senate Republicans denounced the blueprint as a launchpad for an unparalleled wave of spending that could ruin the country’s finances and its economy. Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the House Republican leader, picked up the mantle after passage, warning of “a socialist spending binge that will crush families, dismantle our economy and reshape our country in the worst possible way.”

The budget resolution will ultimately allow Democrats to use the fast-track budget reconciliation process to shield the legislation from a Republican filibuster. It will pave the way to expand Medicare to include dental, health and vision benefits, and possibly to lower the program’s eligibility age from 65; fund a host of climate change programs; provide free prekindergarten and community college; create a paid family and medical leave program; and levy higher taxes on wealthy businesses and corporations.

Senate Republicans sought to exploit Democratic divisions through the so-called vote-a-rama, where an unlimited number of amendments could be offered by both parties. It was the third vote-a-rama this year, after Democrats prevailed in two identical exercises to push their \$1.9 trillion pandemic relief package through Congress.

The marathon of nearly four dozen votes also gave Republicans a platform to hammer Democrats for trying to advance a package of this magnitude without their input, as well as distinguish the process from the public works plan many of them had supported.

“You’re putting in motion, I think, the demise of America as we know it,” said Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, the top Republican on the Budget Committee. “You’re putting in motion a government that nobody’s grandchild can ever afford to pay.”

The proposed changes, many of which were shot down along party lines, were nonbinding and intended more to burnish a political case against Democratic senators facing re-election in 2022 than to become law. Some Republicans said the brunt of their proposals would wait until the subsequent legislation was finished, when changes could actually be adopted.

The hourslong stretch began with a vote that would prohibit funding or regulations to establish the Green New Deal, with Senator John Barrasso, Republican of Wyoming, declaring that under any such provision “millions and millions of Americans will suffer.”

“I have no problem voting for this amendment, because it has nothing to do with the Green New Deal,” Mr. Sanders shot back. The amendment passed unanimously.

Democrats worked to remain in lock step to ward off many of the Republican proposals, including a provision from Senator Charles E. Grassley, Republican of Iowa, that would prevent changes to the cap on how much taxpayers can deduct in state and local taxes. Democrats from high-tax states, particularly New York, New Jersey and California, have made raising or repealing the cap a priority, and a partial repeal is under discussion to be included in the final legislation.

Proposals to force the reopening of schools shuttered to stop the spread of the coronavirus and opposing Mr. Biden’s ban on new oil and gas leases on federal land also fell short.



*Senate Budget Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., center, walks towards the Senate floor as the Senate moves from passage of the infrastructure bill to focus on a massive \$3.5 trillion budget resolution, a blueprint of President Joe Biden’s top domestic policy ambitions.
(Photo: Andrew Harnik/AP)*

But a few amendments signaled potential fights to come. Three Democrats — Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona, Mr. Manchin and Ms. Sinema — supported a provision calling for electric vehicle tax credits to be limited to lower- and middle-income consumers. Mr. Manchin joined Republicans in backing the Hyde Amendment, which bans federal funding for abortion and which Democrats are aiming to remove from annual spending bills.

Mr. Manchin also voted with the Republicans to adopt an amendment from Senator Tom Cotton, Republican of Arkansas, to try to block the teaching of so-called critical race theory in public schools.

Democrats supported some amendments as a way to defang Republican attempts to weaponize the process, including a measure by Senator Tommy Tuberville, Republican of Alabama, to penalize local governments that reduced funding for the police, reflecting a conservative push to attack Democrats over calls to defund or abolish police departments.

“I am so excited — this is perhaps the highlight of this long and painful and torturous night,” an exuberant Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey, proclaimed in response, urging his colleagues to “not walk, but sashay down there” to vote for the amendment. “I’m sure I will see no political ads attacking anybody here over defunding the police.”

How it will be paid for: The plan calls for the investments to be offset by a combination of new tax revenues, health care savings and long-term economic growth. It calls for raising money through IRS enforcement and proposes a new fee on carbon pollution. The plan prohibits tax increases on families making under \$400,000 a year, small businesses and family farms.

Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee: \$726 billion toward universal pre-k for 3 and 4-year olds, childcare for working families, tuition-free community college, investments in historically Black colleges and universities, and investments in primary care.

Judiciary Committee: \$107 billion toward lawful permanent status for qualified immigrants, border security measures.

Finance Committee: At least \$1 billion in deficit reduction, with investments in paid family and medical leave, ACA expansion extension, expanding Medicare to include dental, vision and hearing benefits along with lowering the eligibility age. Also included are investments to address health care provider shortages, the expansion of the child tax credit, long-term care for seniors and people with disabilities, clean energy, manufacturing, and transportation tax incentives, housing incentives.

The following offsets are listed for these initiatives: corporate and international tax reform, taxes from high-income individuals, IRS tax enforcement, health care savings and the carbon polluter import fee.

Agriculture Committee: \$135 billion to go toward agriculture conservation, drought and forestry programs to reduce carbon emissions and prevent wildfires, climate research, debt relief, child nutrition, and funding for a Civilian Climate Corps. The budget outline aims to meet Biden’s goal of 80% clean electricity and 50% carbon emissions by 2030.

Banking and Housing Committee: \$332 billion for housing affordability, rental assistance, homeownership initiatives, revitalization projects, zoning, transit improvements and public housing investments.

Energy and Natural Resources Committee: \$198 billion toward clean electricity payment program, financing for domestic manufacturing of clean energy and auto supply chain technologies, federal procurement of energy efficient materials, and climate research.

Environment and Public Works Committee: \$67 billion toward funding low-income solar technologies, environmental justice investments in clean water affordability and access, EPA climate and research programs, federal investments in energy efficient buildings

and green materials, and investments in clean vehicles.

Homeland Security Committee: \$37 billion toward improving cybersecurity infrastructure, border management investments, federal investments in green materials procurement.

Indian Affairs Committee: \$20.5 billion toward Native health programs and facilities, education, housing, energy, and language programs.

Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee: \$25 billion toward small business access to credit, investment and markets.

Veterans Affairs Committee: \$18 billion toward upgrading VA facilities.



EMPLOYMENT

HOW SALESFORCE MILITARY HELPS CONTINUE A LEGACY

VA partnered with Salesforce, Inc. in 2020 and has since collaborated to develop a free online training about VA benefits for Veterans.

Salesforce Military, Salesforce's workforce development program, provides military personnel, Veterans, and spouses with free training in high-demand technology skills and certifications. It helps them land meaningful careers in the Salesforce ecosystem.

Salesforce's training helped me realize I could use in the tech industry the skills I cultivated during military service. I want to help other military personnel do the same.

This is my story

Growing up as an Army brat, I knew that military service was what I was born to do. I followed in my father's and grandfather's footsteps and became an infantry officer in the U.S. Army.

After in-depth schooling and training, I thought I was prepared for all the possibilities of combat. On July 28, 2003, I realized how wrong I was.



We were driving through east Baghdad to our brigade headquarters for a coordination meeting. Suddenly, there was an explosion that rocked our vehicle and filled it with dust. Immediately after, I felt a massive concussion go through my body.

My teammates and I were all injured in the aftermath, and tragically, our driver, Specialist William (Bill) J. Maher, didn't survive.

After he passed, Maher was one of the reasons I began training future officers to be mentally and professionally prepared to lead other soldiers. I think of my responsibility to continue to serve and honor him, as well as the rest of the men and women in the military community.

Helping military transition to meaningful careers

After I transitioned out of the military, my focus became helping other military community members transition out of service to find meaningful careers, as I did with Salesforce.

Salesforce Military helps Veterans reskill and upskill. I help soon-to-be-discharged soldiers who are nervous about finding employment after service. I also help Veterans who are struggling through a career change – their new call of duty.

Since its inception in 2014, Salesforce Military has helped service members, Veterans and their spouses learn in-demand technology skills. The Salesforce Military program has upskilled and reskilled more than 30,000 military Trailblazers.

Through the Salesforce Talent Alliance, an initiative that connects employers to Salesforce candidates, we bring new talent for customers and

partner companies to grow, strengthen and diversify their workforces.

Giving Veterans a workforce competitive edge

VA's partnership with Salesforce Military helps offer Veterans a competitive edge in the workforce. That's critical to their well-being as they transition from military service into civilian life.

Access to meaningful employment is also a social determinant of health that can decrease suicide risk.

VA supports Veterans like Crain who have experienced trauma – such as traumatic brain injury (TBI) or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – through its National Center for PTSD and VA's Office of Research & Development's research into TBI.

Other VA partnerships such as the one with the Daniel and Salvador Montoya Heroes Foundation also helps match Veterans to Veteran-friendly companies, to provide them with employment opportunities.

Learn more about Salesforce Military at veterans.force.com.

Learn more about VHA partnerships by visiting the VHA National Center for Healthcare Advancement and Partnerships website at va.gov/healthpartnerships.

The Salesforce VA partnership in developing a workforce development program to aid transitioning servicemembers aligns with The American Legion's **Resolution No 542: National Economic Commission Veterans Employment Policy**; whereby manpower development and retraining be vigorously pursued so that in the end all veterans are gainfully employed in suitable and respectable occupations in which they can make their greatest contributions to their country and their economy.



Staff Meetings & Conferences on Employment

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a VSO/Stakeholder meeting with VETS Acting Asst. Secretary James Rodriguez, VETS Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations and Management, Margarita Devlin, and VETS Chief of Staff, Julian Purdy. Some items discussed were:

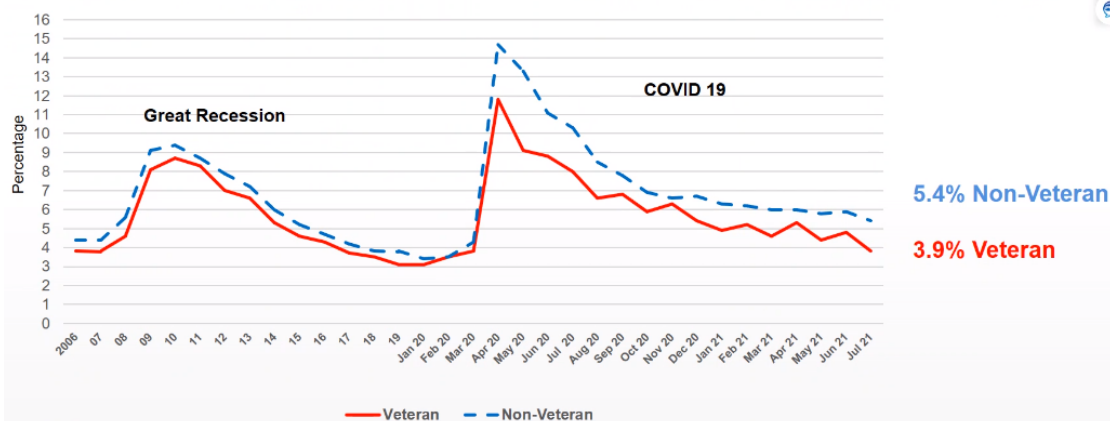
- Winter (Tap Program Director) Launched **Employment Navigator Pilot Program** April 1st, 2021.
- **Transition Employment Assistance for Military Spouses (TEAMS)** launched first four workshops with good responses. Additional 5 piloted in May to be added in September (Federal Hiring, Interview Skills, Salary negotiation, etc.)
- **TAP Initiatives** (Apprenticeship Pilot concluded March 31st.)
- **Employment Fundamentals of Career Transition (EFCT)** Tap Curriculum to Pilot Fall 2021
- **Off Base Transition Training Pilot (OBTT)** Starting January 2022
- Eightfold.AI Veteran Employment Challenge Pilot: Outcome to launch limited pilot at 9+ selected Tap Sites Fall 2021

Margarita Devlin (Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations + Management) will be testifying for Transition Programs on September 15.

ECONOMIC NEWS RELEASE

- The national unemployment rate is **5.9 percent (June 2021)**
- **Gulf War II veterans' unemployment rate is 5.2 percent**
- **Gulf War II women veterans' unemployment rate is 9.5 percent**
- In June 2021, the veteran unemployment rate was **4.8%**. The comparable non-veteran unemployment rate was **5.9%** in June
- **Newly discharged veterans claiming benefits totaled 571, an increase of 6 from the preceding week.**

Unemployment Rates for Veterans and Non-Veterans 2006-Present



HOUSEHOLD DATA

Table A-5. Employment status of the civilian population 18 years and over by veteran status, period of service, and sex, not seasonally adjusted
[Numbers in thousands]

| Employment status, veteran status, and period of service | Total | | Men | | Women | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | June 2020 | June 2021 | June 2020 | June 2021 | June 2020 | June 2021 |
| Unemployed | 776 | 437 | 675 | 375 | 101 | 62 |
| Unemployment rate | 8.6 | 4.8 | 8.5 | 4.7 | 9.6 | 5.5 |



EDUCATION

ERRORS COST STUDENT VETS GI BILL BENEFITS. NOW, HOWARD UNIVERSITY IS SCRAMBLING TO SAVE VA FUNDING

Tiahna Pantovich, 26, sounds exhausted as she recounts the months of administrative bumbles at Howard University that forced her out of her home in the Washington, D.C., area.

She spent the better part of four years as an Arabic and Spanish linguist at Fort Hood, Texas, earning the GI Bill benefits that would support a blossoming academic career.

An associate's degree at the Defense Language Institute was followed by degrees from Central Texas College and the University of Michigan. Now, she's only nine months from completing her master's in social work at Howard University, a school she loves.

But in January, she says, Howard, a prestigious Washington, D.C. school, botched her certification to the Department of Veterans Affairs, misreporting her degree program. That meant she didn't get the housing stipend that goes along with the support she earned through her military service for two months.

She received the withheld funds in March, but missing out on the critical housing allowances for that long put her on the verge of losing her home in the suburbs outside of D.C., where rent is sky high. That, on top of other issues Howard has had managing veteran benefits, led Pantovich to seek cheaper housing an hour away from campus. She'll soon be relocating to Baltimore to cut her rent nearly in half.

A school official recommended she go to a food bank for help. Fortunately, Women Veterans Interactive, an advocacy group, gave her a \$2,000 grant to help cover bills.

"I am being displaced by my own school," Pantovich told Military.com. "I don't want a blanket and a bagged sandwich. I deserve much better than that, not to be displaced. I am having to pack up my home and leave because [Howard University] dropped the ball."

An investigation by Military.com found a pattern of clerical errors impacting student veterans at Howard University. This history of mistakes culminated in the school receiving word on April 5 that it would soon lose its GI Bill status for any new students.

For at least the past year, Howard repeatedly has mishandled veteran education benefits, the investigation revealed. Beyond the issues Pantovich described that imperiled her housing, other veterans have reported disappearing or incorrect paperwork. And until Howard fixes its eligibility issues with the VA, the government won't foot the bill for any new GI Bill students to attend the school.

The GI Bill is more than college tuition. Many argue it's one of the government's most successful programs aimed at giving veterans a clear path to the middle class, and one of the most powerful recruitment tools for the Defense Department. The roughly 1 million student veterans and beneficiaries who use it every year also receive a book stipend and a housing allowance, which can amount to around \$2,000 per month in the D.C. area. Many rely on that allowance to pay their rent or mortgage.

In April the District of Columbia's State Approving Agency, or SAA, revoked Howard University's ability to allow newly enrolled student veterans to use their GI Bill benefits. The decision took effect June 15, triggering a 60-day window for Howard to fix its eligibility issues to avoid a longer and more consequential suspension that could impact all GI Bill beneficiaries and could be permanent. SAAs have authority delegated from the VA to audit some 4,000 schools so veterans do not waste their taxpayer-funded scholarship on bogus institutions.

An official with the D.C. SAA who worked on Howard's suspension told Military.com they could not discuss the specifics of the situation

because they are not authorized to speak to the press. The D.C. SAA did not respond to multiple requests for on-the-record interviews.

It's rare that a state agency strips a school's GI Bill eligibility. Founded in 1867, Howard is an elite university and one of the most prestigious historically Black colleges in the country. Such a move is typically reserved for predatory schools deemed to be providing minimal education to students for exorbitant fees. In this case, Howard's loss of eligibility is tied to administrative issues.



(Photo: Tiahna Pantovich)

A VA spokesperson told Military.com in a statement that the D.C. SAA suspended the school to afford time to "correct GI Bill approval deficiencies." The school was quickly scrubbed after losing accreditation in June from the VA's database, which allows veterans to compare schools easily and see how their benefits would work at

each institution. As of Dec. 31, the agency's most recent data, 235 students using the GI Bill were enrolled at Howard.

The suspension does not impact any currently enrolled beneficiaries, the spokesperson added.

School spokesman Frank Tramble said this year's process for filing for eligibility with the VA is different than previous years. New rules with the D.C. SAA caught the school off guard when the university submitted its paperwork on March 22, with the decertification of the school effective June 15, he said. Tramble said he couldn't point to the specific bureaucratic changes Howard had missed. Howard has since refiled its application with the D.C. SAA. Tramble said he believes the D.C. SAA will make a final decision before the end of the weekend, although that is after tuition bills for students were due Aug. 9 for the fall semester. Sunday marks the end of the 60-day period granted to Howard to fix paperwork errors

or face continued suspension and harsher VA-related penalties.

"This is not something we're very happy about; we expect this weekend to have a final decision on our status," Tramble told Military.com in an interview. "From our understanding, there are new requirements that weren't there before. It's very unique to this year. We had to go on a 60-day suspension to complete the rest of the work."

Joseph Wescott, who previously served as president of the National Association of State Approving Agencies, or NASAA, which oversees SAAs, said agencies are flexible with schools, adding that cracking down on legitimate schools over paperwork snafus is rare.

He characterized NASAA as "the gatekeepers of quality," with the goal being to "protect the integrity of the GI Bill" and shield veterans from predatory and underwhelming schools.

"Most schools of this stature don't want us having this conversation, which makes this confusing," Wescott told Military.com. "There would've been multiple requests before suspensions."

A Pattern of Failing Veterans

At the center of Howard's connection between the university and the VA is Christopher Rhone, the school's coordinator for student veterans. It's common for major universities to have full-time staff to assist student veterans with their benefits, and sometimes act as a middle man between the student and the VA. When Military.com reached out to Rhone by phone, he declined an interview request, saying he wasn't authorized by the school to talk to the press.

Multiple students described problems with Rhone -- that he consistently mishandled paperwork and did not warn them in time that the school had lost its GI Bill eligibility for new students.

Leana Mason, 27, recently moved to the D.C. area from California and is paying around \$1,700 in rent. She signed a lease and is one of the new students who is set to be impacted by Howard losing its status as a GI Bill-approved school. She is a Ph.D. candidate, on the hook for an enormous

tuition bill. She painted a picture of Howard's being uncommunicative and failing to warn incoming students they won't be able to use their tuition or earn their housing allowance.

"I only found out about this suspension after a discussion with other students [in July]," Mason told Military.com.

Mason submitted all the required documentation to Rhone in May so she could use her GI Bill but did not hear back, she said. On June 15, the school lost its GI Bill credentials. Yet on June 21, Rhone told her in emails reviewed by Military.com she would be able to attend with her military scholarship. She wouldn't find out for another month that the GI Bill would be no good at Howard.

"I would be more than happy to assist you with requesting your VA benefits," school officials with the veteran's office wrote to Mason a week after the school lost its GI Bill status with new students like her. The email made no mention of the problem.

That day, the school gave her a list of documents to fill out that she returned within hours. The following day, June 22, Rhone asked more questions about documents that she told him she already had submitted. Again, there was no mention her GI Bill benefits were at risk of being useless for the upcoming fall semester.

On July 22, the school held a webinar during which officials told students that Howard gave the VA all the documents needed for certification, according to two students who attended. Officials told students the problem would be resolved in a week. It was not.

"They muted us and closed the chat," Mason said about the webinar. She added that a lot of students had questions that were not answered and university officials offered only vague responses. Tramble, the school's spokesperson, said students were asked to submit questions ahead of time and some live questions were taken. It's unclear why the school waited more than two months to answer questions about critical GI Bill issues. Tramble said emails were sent out to student

veterans warning of the issue. Students who spoke to Military.com said they did not get a notice ahead of the webinar.

Tramble added that Howard is considering creating a stipend program for impacted veterans if it fails to secure eligibility in the coming days. It's unclear whether that program would come to fruition, and no details on who would get checks or how much they would receive have been released.



(Photo: Leana Mason)

Another student who spoke to Military.com on the condition of anonymity, fearing retaliation from the school, painted a similar picture of constant paperwork issues. She is \$16,000 in debt to the school after she says staff mishandled her paperwork, misreporting her major and telling the VA she is in a program that doesn't exist.

Because of these issues, she lost out on the full housing stipends she was entitled to in fall 2020 and eventually was cut off from the stipend and her tuition payments. She is not sure whether she can go back to school and instead is looking for temporary and permanent positions in the Army Reserve.

Aniela Szymanski, a veterans issues attorney with Representing Heroes, an advocacy organization, said in an interview with Military.com that problems with botched paperwork and delayed benefits aren't normal. She also suggests the case with Howard is a warning to all GI Bill beneficiaries that, even with prestigious schools, students need to be vigilant to ensure their institution is veteran-friendly.

"Students have to be proactive, and if something looks off, if there are delays, if they can't get straight answers, they need to call the GI Bill hotline. The school is biased; perhaps they won't always be the most forthcoming to protect their reputation. The next best option is to work with

the school to delay starting." Szymanski told Military.com

Howard Loses Its Eligibility

State agencies generally favor giving institutions accreditation when there's any doubt, according to Wescott. Suspending one comes with huge consequences for veterans, displacing them from their school and costing them their income from stipends.

"It's the state approval agency, not the state disapproval agency," Wescott said. "The process is not complicated; it's very straightforward. Suspension is a last resort."

The Protect GI Bill Act, federal legislation signed into law in January, strengthened laws protecting student veterans from fraudulent schools and gave teeth to state approving agencies by clarifying that they could cut off schools from GI Bill money. In some cases, that can be a huge chunk of a school's income.

None of the experts who spoke with Military.com had heard of other schools besides Howard losing eligibility since the new law went into effect.

Howard's issues may stem from trouble navigating the VA's bureaucracy and may not be indicative of the school's overall quality, as there's no evidence Howard is predatory toward veterans.

Carrie Wofford, the president of Veterans Education Success, an advocacy group that often lobbies Congress on GI Bill issues, told Military.com that Howard surely has issues with processing veteran benefits, but it's a relatively small fish compared to a wide array of what she called fraudulent schools that SAAs have taken no action against.

"It would be a disgrace if VA were to cut off Howard for paperwork compliance but not do anything about the known fraudsters," Wofford said. "VA and the D.C. SAA should help Howard figure out the paperwork issues and resolve it.

Howard is arguably the most important historically Black college in the country and provides a great education. VA should be helping great schools and focusing any punishment on fraudsters."

Last year, the Trump administration suspended education benefits for new students at five universities for deceptive enrollment practices aimed at veterans. The colleges included the University of Phoenix, which a year earlier was required to refund \$50 million and cancel another \$141 million in debt for its marketing practices toward student veterans.

Colorado Technical University, American InterContinental University, Bellevue University and Temple University also were included. The VA ultimately backed down from plans to bar the schools, despite veteran organizations clamoring for the agency to crack down on predatory schools, mostly in the for-profit sector.

Will Hubbard, the vice president for veterans and military policy for Veterans Education Success, told Military.com that Howard simply doesn't appear to have the useful "institutional" relationship with the military community or the VA. He said oftentimes the schools that are the best at paperwork are those that use predatory tactics to recruit veterans or set up non-accredited programs.

In 2018, the VA inspector general warned the department could waste \$2.3 billion in payments to "ineligible colleges" through 2023. In the bulk of cases, the payments would go to for-profit universities or bogus schools. Howard is a private, not-for-profit school.

"There is no shortage of bad schools," Hubbard said. "Some of the worst schools are the best at paperwork."

Still, Howard's history of mishandling paperwork for existing students has led to gaps in funding, like the one experienced by Pantovich, gaps that have made it difficult for students to complete degrees.

"I think that the big shocking part here is not keeping students informed," Szymanski told Military.com.

"They told the VA the wrong program," she said. "My funding stopped in January, and I begged the school to fix it. I told them I'd go into debt; I'm stuck in a lease I couldn't afford. I told them this needed to happen.

"I want to finish my degree; I'm nine months away. I love Howard. It is not the institution; it's the middle man in the handoff."

Staff Meetings & Conferences on Education

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a conference with Veterans Education Success Chief of Staff Will Hubbard on Howard University suspension and pending withdrawal. Also, a conversation with Steve Beynon of Military.COM about SAA role and actions against schools out of compliance was held. Joseph Wescott as American Legion Higher Education Consultant is to attempt to protect the GI Bill benefits of the approximately 235 veterans enrolled there.



HOMELESS VETERANS STAND DOWN



HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING

FEDERAL GRANTS TO SUPPORT "STAND DOWN" EVENTS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO HOMELESS VETERANS

Oregon's U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley today announced that organizations in Coos, Curry, Klamath, Lake and Washington

counties earned more than \$17,000 in grants from the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS) to host events

that provide supplies and services homeless veterans.

“Oregonians who put their lives on the line abroad to protect the communities we hold most dear should get the support they’ve earned for a smooth transition to civilian life back at home,” Wyden said. “These Stand Down events can be a lifeline for veterans struggling to make ends meet, with their mental health and other needs. I will never stop fighting to ensure that veterans receive the health care and benefits they’ve earned in service to this nation.”

“Oregon service members sacrifice so much to protect our freedom every day, so it is our duty to show up for them when they need help,” Merkley said. “As many veterans struggle with transitioning back home and are often left without the benefits they earned from their brave service, these Stand Down events provide access to various programs that can assist them with issues such as mental health or housing, and give them the care that every veteran deserves. I will continue to fight for our men and women in uniform and ensure that they are taken care of when they return home.”

[DOL VETS Stand Downs](#) are typically one- to three-day events providing supplies and services to homeless veterans, such as food, shelter, clothing, health screenings and VA Social Security benefits counseling. Veterans can also receive referrals to other assistance such as health care, housing solutions, employment, substance use treatment and mental health counseling. They are collaborative events, coordinated between local VA Medical Centers, DOL and other government agencies and community-based homeless service providers. The funding will be distributed as follows:

Southwest Oregon Veterans Outreach, Inc.: \$7,000 for Stand Down event on September 17, 2021.

Klamath and Lake Counties: \$7,000 for Stand Down event on September 17, 2021.

Washington County: \$3,225 for Stand Down event on October 15, 2021.

“Thank you Senators Wyden and Merkley for your continued leadership and commitment to serving those who have served our country,” said Rebecca Miller, Program Supervisor for Disability, Aging and Veteran Services at Washington County. “With the grant funds we just received we will hold a Veteran Stand Down on October 15, which will help veterans access critical housing, employment and health resources. Your advocacy for veterans supports critical events like our Stand Down as well as the work of our county veteran services program throughout the year.”

“We are very grateful to the Department of Labor for this grant that will help us reach out to and help more veterans,” said Tom Venz, Secretary/Treasurer of SW Oregon Veterans Outreach Inc.

The American Legion recognizes the efforts made by DOL VETS to provide grants to Oregon organizations to host stand down events to aid homeless veterans, which aligns with **Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs**, whereby DOL programs continue to provide priority services to veterans.

VETERAN ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESS TO VA HOME LOANS EXPANDED

New changes passed by Congress and signed by the President have expanded Veteran eligibility and access to VA’s home loan program.

Public Law 116-315, “The Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020”

1. Broadens the timeframe of Veterans qualifying for the Vietnam War era and has been revised to include those who served from November 1, 1955. The previous date was February 28, 1961.
2. Authorizes benefit access for those service members and Veterans mobilized to perform full-time National Guard duty for not less than 90 cumulative days, including at least 30 days consecutive.
3. Veterans, service members, and certain surviving spouses with VA-guaranteed home loans in areas that have been declared major disasters by the President and whose residences have been substantially damaged are now eligible to be charged a first time use funding fee on a new VA-guaranteed loan rather than a subsequent use funding fee. The new VA-guaranteed loan must be for the repair or construction of the dwelling and closed within three years of the presidential declaration of the disaster.

For more information about the VA Home Loan Program, visit <https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/home-loans/>.

Veterans and service members interested in exploring VA home loan options or applying for a loan are encouraged to contact a mortgage lender of their choosing.



The American Legion supports the administrative and legislative efforts that improve and strengthen the Loan Guaranty service's ability to serve America's Veterans per **Resolution No. 329: Support Home Loan Guaranty Program**.

Staff Meetings & Conferences on Homelessness and Housing

The American Legion has been committed to end homelessness among veterans and their family members. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2020 Continuum of Care Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Report, on a single night 37,252 veterans were experiencing homelessness. Although national estimates show a somewhat steady decrease from 2017 to 2019, there was a slight increase in the number of homeless veterans staying in unsheltered locations such as streets, vehicles, or parks in 2020. The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), Housing and Urban Development, and Labor have programs aimed to assist homeless veterans; however, have cited challenges in implementing selected programs, notably shortages in VA case managers, and housing costs and availability. The VA and other agencies have taken steps to address these challenges, to include contracting out services due to limited staffing and offering rental subsidies for low-income veterans. One of the VA offices that is actively engaged in ending homelessness among veterans is the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Homeless Programs Office (HPO).

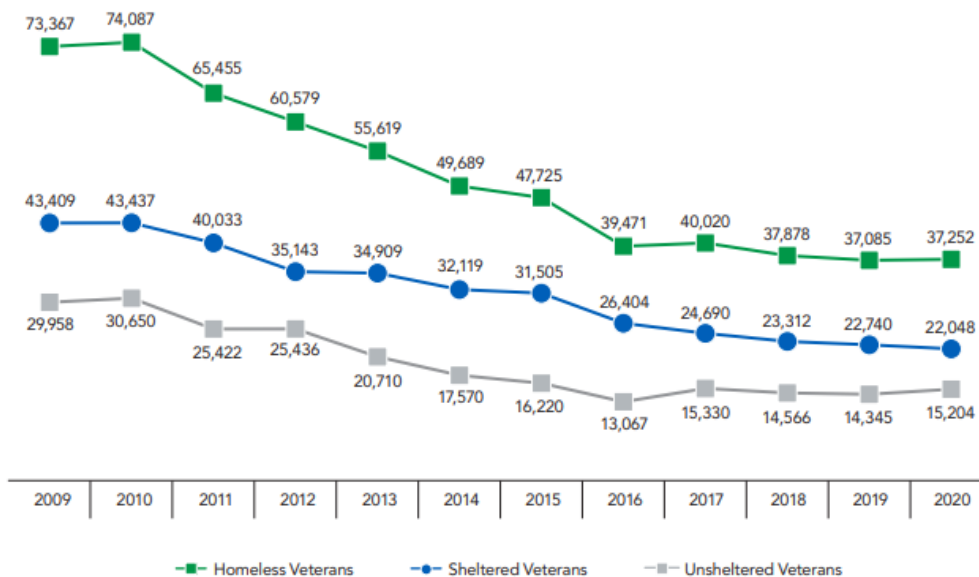
The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attend a virtual meeting with Monica Diaz, Executive Director of the HPO. She provided an overview of the HPO's mission and vision, which is to "assist veterans and their family members in obtaining permanent and sustainable housing

with access to high-quality health care and supportive services, and to ensure that veteran homelessness is prevented or otherwise rare, brief, and nonrecurring” and to “end homelessness for all Veterans and their families” using an evidence-based approach and innovative practices. Additionally, she shared their Strategic Plan for 2021-2025, which listed several key objectives. They consisted of expanding and increasing housing stock, preventing and resolving returns to homelessness, enhancing targeted services to address the needs of high acuity and vulnerable populations, supporting the development of a highly skilled workforce, using research and state of the art analytical data, evaluation tools and process to make informed and timely decisions and providing equitable services and outcomes through all homeless programs and services. Additionally, the strategic plan identified several key strategies to achieve these objectives, to include exploring converting excess transitional housing to permanent housing, increasing case management for veterans through VA-designated grants and contracted staffing, continuing to advocate for filling homeless program vacancies, and promoting research that provides a comprehensive understanding of homeless programs and the veterans and families they serve. The American Legion concurs with the HPO’s five year strategic plan in accordance with *Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs*.

References:

- **VHA HPO External Strategic Plan 2021-2025:**
https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/VHA_Strategic_Plan_External_May2021_Final_508.pdf
- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Exchange: 2020 Continuum of Care Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Report- All States, Territories, Puerto Rico, and DC:**
https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_NatTerrDC_2020.pdf
- **The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: The 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress:** <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

EXHIBIT 5.1: PIT Estimates of Homeless Veterans
 By Sheltered Status, 2009–2020





PATRIOT BOOT CAMP

ACTIVATE ★ MENTOR ★ CREATE

PRESENTED BY



Berkeley College®

SMALL BUSINESS

PATRIOT BOOT CAMP PARTNERS WITH BERKELEY COLLEGE TO HELP THE MILITARY COMMUNITY GROW TECH STARTUPS

Applications are now open for the October 2021 2-day virtual program that mentors future entrepreneurial leaders. Patriot Boot Camp is partnering with Berkeley College to help the military community grow more tech startups.

Are you a service member, Veteran, or military spouse entrepreneur who wants to learn how to start and grow your business? According to the Small Business Administration, Veteran-owned businesses represent 9.1% of American owned businesses. Studies show that Veterans tend to out-earn non-Veteran entrepreneurs.

Only 50 slots available, apply now

Patriot Boot Camp will accept 50 participants for the program and provide educational programming, world-class speakers, resources

and subject matter experts who will deliver individual mentoring sessions.

“Berkeley College has a longstanding commitment to the welfare and success of military students, Veterans, and their families,” said Diane Recinos, vice president of Student Success at Berkeley College. “We are excited to partner with Patriot Boot Camp to ensure their future success in entrepreneurial ventures.”

Virtual Fall Boot Camp for entrepreneurs

The next Patriot Boot Camp will be held virtually on October 14-15, 2021. You can find the agenda [here](#).

Step1: Are you an ideal candidate for Patriot Boot Camp? Click [here](#) to find out.

Step 2: [Apply here, no later than August 30, 2021.](#)

Previous attendees included:

- 72% Veteran
- 60% service-connected disability
- 27% female
- 15% active duty

What people say about the program

Here is what Patriot Boot Camp entrepreneurs, sponsors, speakers and mentors are saying about the program:

“PBC is a purpose-driven team making an absolute difference in our military Veteran entrepreneurial ecosystem.” – PBC Virtual Speaker

“This is the single most powerful network I have been a part of!” – PBC Virtual Entrepreneur

“The quality of entrepreneurs accepted to PBC continually impresses me; their results speak for themselves.” – PBC Virtual Mentor

[Apply here NLT August 30, 2021.](#)

“For the first time in our 9-year history, Patriot Boot Camp will also be recruiting from OCONUS (overseas). Service members, military spouses, and Veteran entrepreneurs who are thinking about starting a business or currently have a new start-up are ideal candidates for this program,” said Jennifer Pilcher, CEO and 2013 alumna of the PBC organization. “We are thrilled to provide this opportunity to those currently serving overseas who normally would not be able to travel to an in-person boot camp.”

The American legion lauds The Small Business Administration in helping transitioning servicemembers proliferate tech startups. This aligns with **Resolution No. 156: Veterans Entrepreneur Training Program**, whereby funding be made available to help veterans return to productive civilian professions.

¿Did You Know?

The VETS 2 GWAC is the only GWAC set aside exclusively for Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB). It’s designed to meet diverse agency IT services requirements, including new and emerging technologies.

Looking for VETS 2 training? Register for an [upcoming webinar](#), take training online through [Defense Acquisition University \(DAU\)](#) or review training within the [GSA Acquisition Gateway](#).

VETS 2 GOVERNMENTWIDE ACQUISITION CONTRACT (GWAC)

A governmentwide acquisition contract exclusively for service-disabled veteran owned small business to sell IT services such as:

- Data management
- Information and communication technology
- IT operations and maintenance
- IT security
- Software development
- Systems design
- New and emerging technologies

Industry partners

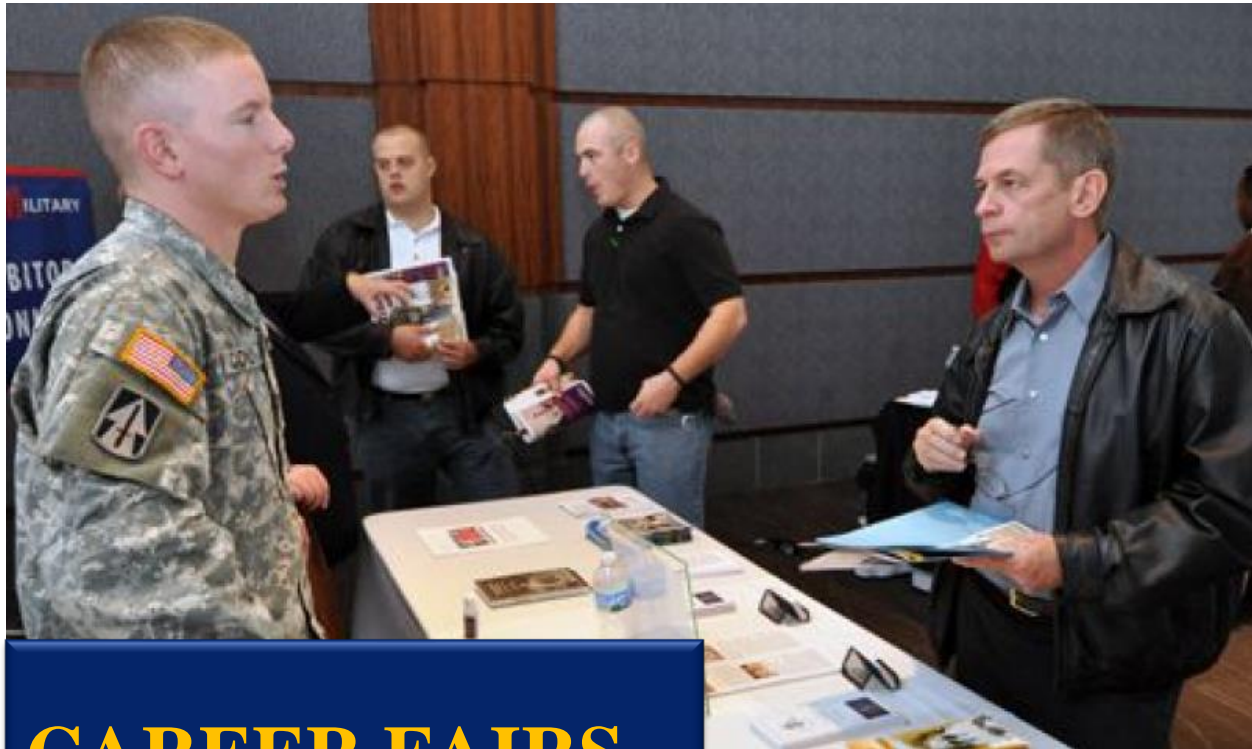
Access our [industry partners](#) for information on the VETS 2 contract holders.

- [VETS 2 industry partner spreadsheet \[XLSX - 20 KB\]](#)
- [VETS 2 capabilities \[PDF - 391 KB\]](#)

Ordering guide and contract library

Browse [resources](#) for the:

- [VETS 2 ordering guide \[PDF - 1 MB\]](#)
- [VETS 2 contract \[PDF - 713 KB\]](#)
- [Marketing materials](#)
- [Agency memos](#)



CAREER FAIRS

Denver Veterans Job Fair

August 19, 2021

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM EDT

In-Person Hiring Event

A RecruitMilitary Job Fair is an event where job seekers with military experience can meet with recruiters from local and national companies. These events are free for U.S veterans, military spouses, transitioning military, and members of the Guard and Reserve.

[Register Here](#)

Detroit Job Fair

**August 19, 2021
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM EDT**

In-Person Hiring Event

A RecruitMilitary Job Fair is an event where job seekers with military experience can meet with recruiters from local and national companies. These events are free for U.S veterans, military spouses, transitioning military, and members of the Guard and Reserve.

[Register Here](#)

Veteran Get Hired Workshop

**August 18, 2021
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST**

Hire G.I. connects transitioning active duty military personnel, veterans, and their spouses with quality military friendly employers, franchise organizations, and educational institutions.

[Register Here](#)

The American Legion is working on future virtual workshops and career fairs.

The American Legion's National Veterans Employment & Education Commission's Mission is to take actions that affect veterans' economic well-being, including issues relating to veterans' education, employment, home loans, vocational rehabilitation, homelessness, and small business.



LEGISLATION TRACKING

SMALL BUSINESS

H.R. 2082 - VA Supply Chain Resiliency Act: This bill would make certain improvements relating to the supply chain of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Status: 5/4/2021 - Voted 22 - 6 by House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Support: 4/21/2021 - This bill was submitted for testimony

[Resolution No. 55: Mandatory use of the Veterans First Contracting Program](#)

H.R. 4515: This bill would amend the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors.

Status: 7/19/2021 - Referred to the House Committee on Small Business

Resolution: *Pending Draft Resolution*

H.R.1687 - Small Business Cyber Training Act of 2021: This bill requires the Small Business Administration to establish a program for certifying at least 5 or 10% of the total number of employees of a small business development center to provide cybersecurity planning assistance to small businesses.

Status: 5/18/2021 – Introduced in the Senate

Resolution: *Pending Draft Resolution*

EDUCATION

S. 1480 - Recognizing Military Service in PSLF Act: This bill would allow service members who pause their student loan payments while deployed or on extended active duty orders to count that period of time toward their PSLF progress – which is currently not allowed.

Status: 4/29/2021 - Referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

[Resolution No. 101 Support for Continuation of Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program](#)

H.R. 1836 - Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2021: This bill would expand eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill to count every day that a servicemember is paid and in uniform toward benefit eligibility in order to achieve GI Bill parity for National Guard and Reserve members.

Status: 6/16/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

[Resolution No. 349: Support Legislation to Improve the Post-9/11 GI Bill](#)

S. 1607 - Student Veterans Transparency and Protection Act of 2021: This bill would improve veterans' access to information about higher education and allow the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to restore benefits that veterans use at schools subject to civil enforcement.

Status: 05/13/2021 - Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

[Resolution No. 327: Support further Assessment and Evaluation of Institutions of Higher Learning to Enable Veterans to Make Informed Education Choices](#)

H.R. 2587 - SERVE Act: This bill would improve the ability of veterans with medical training to assist the United States in response to national emergencies by implementing programs to certify and credential veterans.

Status: 4/15/2021 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

[Resolution No. 338: Support Licensure and Certification of Servicemembers, Veterans and Spouses](#)

H.R. 3586 - Veteran Education Empowerment Act: This bill would reauthorize and improve a grant program to assist institutions of higher education in establishing, maintaining, improving, and operating Student Veteran Centers

Status: 5/28/2021 - Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

H.R. 2327 - This bill would eliminate the time period for eligibility under Survivors' And Dependents' Educational Assistance Program of Department of Veterans Affairs

Status: 4/28/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

H.R. 4233 - Student Veterans Counseling Centers Eligibility Act: This bill would award grants to community-based Veteran Centers to provide counseling and mental health services to veterans using VA higher education benefits.

Status: 6/29/2021 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

EMPLOYMENT

S. 94 - Hire Student Veterans Act: This bill allows a work opportunity tax credit for hiring a veteran attending an educational institution using educational assistance provided under certain programs administered by the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Status: 1/28/2021 - Referred to the Committee on Finance

[Resolution No. 354: Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program](#)

HOUSING

H.R.492 - Supporting Veteran Families in Need Act: To amend title 38, United States Code, make permanent the Secretary of Veterans Affairs' authority to provide financial assistance for supportive services for very low-income veteran families in permanent housing.

Status: 6/16/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

Support: 4/21/2021 - This bill was submitted for testimony

[Resolution No. 331: Support Housing Preference for Low-Income Veterans in the Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)

S. 1838 - Building Credit Access for Veterans Act of 2021: This bill expands access to housing for veterans and current servicemembers by establishing a pilot program using alternative credit scoring information for veterans and service member.

Status: 5/26/2021 - Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Support: 4/21/2021 - This bill was submitted for testimony

H.R. 711 - West Los Angeles VA Campus Improvement Act of 2021: This legislation would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) West Los Angeles Medical Center campus to use revenues from leases and easements as a dedicated funding source to build additional housing for homeless veterans, offset the high costs of housing construction, and help fund the provision of supportive services for veterans in the community.

Status: 6/23/2021 - Became Public Law No: 117-18

Support: 4/21/2021 - This bill was submitted for testimony

H.R. 2190 - Helping Homeless Veterans Act of 2021: This bill permanently establishes existing programs that assist homeless veterans and other veterans with special needs.

Status: 6/16/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

S. 2172 - Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness Act: This bill improves grants, payments, and technical assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to serve homeless veterans.

Status: 6/23/2021 - Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Support: 6/23/2021 - This bill was submitted for testimony

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

GLOSSARY OF FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

ACE: American Council on Education

ACP: American Corporate Partners, a veteran's support organization

ATLAS: Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations, a V.A. telehealth initiative

BLS: Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics

C&P: V.A.'s Compensation and Pension exam

CAVC: Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

CCME: Council of College and Military Educators

COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

CSAAVE: California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education

DIMO: Defense Security Cooperation Agency/Defense Institute for Medical Operations

DOD: Department of Defense

DOL-VETS: Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Services

EdCounsel: Higher education consulting firm

EIDL program. SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans

EIDL: Economic Injury Disaster Loan

GAO: Government Accountability Office

GPD: V.A.'s Grant and Per Diem Program for homeless veterans

GWB: George W. Bush Higher Education Policy Work Group

HEROES ACT of 2003: Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003. Grants the Secretary of Education the authority to waive requirements that impede military borrowers' access to critical repayment protection during the war, military operation, or national emergency.

HVAC: House Veterans Affairs Committee

MCAI: American Legion's Military Credentialing Advancement Initiative

MSLP: The Federal Reserve's Main Street Lending Program

MSO: Military Support Organization

NAICU: National Association of Independent Colleges & Universities

NASAA: National Association of State Approving Agencies. Responsible for approving school funding for GI Bill

NAVPA: National Association of Veterans Program Administrators
NCA: V.A.'s National Cemetery Administration
NDAA: National Defense Authorization Act
NLD: American Legion's National Legislative Division
OPM: Office of Personnel Management
PPP: Paycheck Protection Program
RBS: Risk-Based Survey Model
RPIC: Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge
S2S: Service to School, a veteran's organization
SAA: State Approving Agency, responsible for approving school funding for GI Bill
SBA: Small Business Administration
STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Medical
SVA: Student Veterans of America, a veteran's organization
SVAC Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
TAPS: Transition Assistance Program for Survivors, a nonprofit for Gold Star Families
TEAM Act: Senate Bill 4393, to improve the provision of health care for veterans who were exposed to toxic substances from burn pits
TFA: American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance program
USAID: United States Agency for International Development
USDA: United States Department of Agriculture
USERRA: Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act
VA&R: American Legion's Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division
VACO: Veterans Affairs Central Office
VBA: V.A.'s Veterans Benefits Administration
VE&E: Veterans Employment and Education Division
VES: Veterans Education Success, a veteran's organization
VSO: Veterans Service Organization



THE AMERICAN LEGION

VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA



- We are on the Web:
 - <https://www.legion.org/>
- VE&E Publications:
 - https://www.legion.org/publication_s#veterans_employment_&_education
- VE&E Awards:
 - <https://www.legion.org/careers/awards>

Resources:

- Veteran Career/Employment Center:
 - <http://legion.monster.com/?scmdlCmssc=1>
 - <https://www.legion.org/careers/resources>
- Homeless Veterans Find Help:
 - <https://www.legion.org/careers/homelesstaskforce>
 - <https://www.legion.org/homelessveterans/resources>
- Veterans Education Benefits:
 - <https://www.legion.org/education/statebenefits>
 - <https://www.legion.org/education/federalbenefits>
- Veteran Small Business Funding Program:
 - <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs>

MORE STORIES...

DHS HIRING CYBER TALENT AND CISCO LAUNCHES A FREE IT EDUCATION APP

“The Department of Homeland Security is focused on hiring cybersecurity professionals faster with its Cyber Talent Management System” [Continue reading the article](#)

VA STANDS TO PROTECT VETERANS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY CANNOT PROTECT THEMSELVES

“It was just a small, simple, green address book that my mom had pre-populated with addresses of family and close friends. At four in the morning, I didn’t think much of it when my dad handed it to me” [Continue reading the article](#)

NEW DATA ON VETERANS RELEASED DAY AFTER CENSUS

“373,500 Australians have served in the Australian Defence Force over the past 35 years, of which 59,000 are currently serving, according to new statistics released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare” [Continue reading the article](#)

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION BILL COULD MEAN MILLIONS FOR FORT GORDON

“Georgia Sen. Raphael Warnock announced that the Fiscal Year 2022 military construction and veterans affairs committee funding bill includes over \$165 million in investments for Georgia’s bases, including an additional \$21 million beyond the President Joe Biden’s budget request” [Continue reading the article](#)

FACTORS THAT LEAD TO A SUCCESSFUL DIVERSIFIED DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE

“The Department of Defense depends on a wide-ranging and intricate defense industrial base (DIB) for the products, services, and people that empower the DoD’s capabilities in tackling hot national security issues. The entities that work with the DoD should be diverse, and organizations can continue in developing a diversified DIB by partnering with organizations that are a part of the small business 8(a) set-aside program” [Continue reading the article](#)

THE COMPETITION AND COLLABORATION HEATS UP WITH THE FIRST VHA INNOVATION EXPERIENCE VIRTUAL SERIES EVENT

“Every year, Veterans, leaders in health care, VA employees and the public come together to celebrate, discover and connect at the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Innovation Experience (iEX). This year iEX is bigger than ever as it expands into a four-part series with the first event, Breaking Boundaries: Collaboration Challenge and Co-Designing for Tomorrow panel, taking place Aug. 26 and 27. Don’t miss your chance to register for this exciting event today” [Continue reading the article](#)

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