

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 17, 2015

The Honorable Robert A. McDonald
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary McDonald:

We are writing to bring to your attention allegations that a number of questionable unaccredited educational institutions have received G.I. Bill benefits despite federal regulations to prevent it, according to a report this week from the Center for Investigative Reporting. We urge you to investigate these claims swiftly and to increase the Department of Veterans Affairs' enforcement of its protections for veterans' education benefits.

Federal law permits unaccredited educational institutions to receive Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits in limited circumstances to ensure veterans can access professional and trade school expertise. The VA is charged with protecting our veterans from unscrupulous entities by enforcing federal regulations allowing only those institutions whose instruction is "consistent in quality, content, and length" with accredited institutions. VA's enforcement and oversight is critical given over 2,000 unaccredited institutions have reportedly received more than \$260 million in G.I. Bill benefits between 2009 and 2014.

The report documents a number of educationally questionable, and in some instances morally repugnant, institutions that have inexplicably received VA education benefits. These include an unlicensed massage therapy school, an institute whose parent organization is a listed hate group, and an institute on human sexuality claiming to be in possession of child pornography. If true, this is a terrible failure of our promise to veterans and taxpayers. We urge you to immediately and thoroughly investigate these allegations, and step up the VA's enforcement of its regulations in partnership with state approving agencies.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



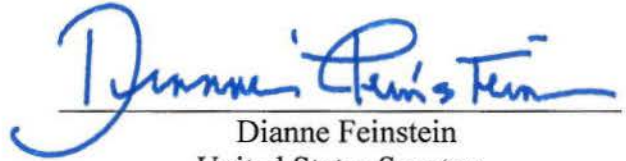
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



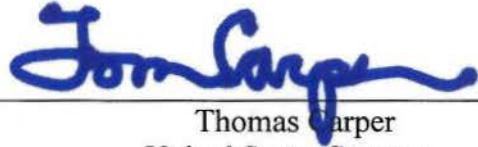
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



Thomas Carper
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Jack Reed
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