

Presidential Documents

Executive Order 13607 of April 27, 2012

Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and Other Family Members

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to ensure that Federal military and veterans educational benefits programs are providing service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members with the information, support, and protections they deserve, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Purpose.* The original GI Bill, approved just weeks after D-Day, educated nearly 8 million Americans and helped transform this Nation. We owe the same obligations to this generation of service men and women as was afforded that previous one. This is the promise of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (title V, Public Law 110–252) (Post-9/11 GI Bill) and the continued provision of educational benefits in the Department of Defense’s Tuition Assistance Program (10 U.S.C. 2007): to provide our service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education and gain the skills and training they need to fill the jobs of tomorrow.

Since the Post-9/11 GI Bill became law, there have been reports of aggressive and deceptive targeting of service members, veterans, and their families by some educational institutions. For example, some institutions have recruited veterans with serious brain injuries and emotional vulnerabilities without providing academic support and counseling; encouraged service members and veterans to take out costly institutional loans rather than encouraging them to apply for Federal student loans first; engaged in misleading recruiting practices on military installations; and failed to disclose meaningful information that allows potential students to determine whether the institution has a good record of graduating service members, veterans, and their families and positioning them for success in the workforce.

To ensure our service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members have the information they need to make informed decisions concerning their well-earned Federal military and veterans educational benefits, I am directing my Administration to develop Principles of Excellence to strengthen oversight, enforcement, and accountability within these benefits programs.

Sec. 2. *Purpose.* The Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Education shall establish Principles of Excellence (Principles) to apply to educational institutions receiving funding from Federal military and veterans educational benefits programs, including benefits programs provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program. The Principles should ensure that these educational institutions provide meaningful information to service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members about the financial cost and quality of educational institutions to assist those prospective students in making choices about how to use their Federal educational benefits; prevent abusive and deceptive recruiting practices that target the recipients of Federal military and veterans educational benefits; and ensure that educational institutions provide high-quality academic and student support services to active-duty service members, reservists, members of the National Guard, veterans, and military families.

and the Attorney General, shall take immediate action to implement this order, and, within 90 days from the date of this order, report to the President their progress on implementation, including promptly revising regulations, Department of Defense Instructions, guidance documents, Memoranda of Understanding, and other policies governing programs authorized or funded by the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program to implement the Principles, to the extent permitted by law.

(c) The Secretaries of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Education shall develop a comprehensive strategy for developing service member and veteran student outcome measures that are comparable, to the maximum extent practicable, across Federal military and veterans educational benefit programs, including, but not limited to, the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program. To the extent practicable, the student outcome measures should rely on existing administrative data to minimize the reporting burden on institutions participating in these benefit programs. The student outcome measures should permit comparisons across Federal educational programs and across institutions and types of institutions. The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs, shall also collect from educational institutions, as part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System and other data collection systems, information on the amount of funding received pursuant to the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program. The Secretary of Education shall make this information publicly available on the College Navigator Website.

(d) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Education, shall provide to prospective military and veteran students, prior to using their benefits, streamlined tools to compare educational institutions using key measures of affordability and value through the Department of Veterans Affairs' eBenefits portal. The eBenefits portal shall be updated to facilitate access to school performance information, consumer protection information, and key Federal financial aid documents. The Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs shall also ensure that service members and veterans have access to that information through educational counseling offered by those Departments.

Sec. 4. Service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members should have access to a strong enforcement system through which to file complaints when institutions fail to follow the Principles. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Education and the Director of the CFPB, as well as with the Attorney General, as appropriate, shall submit to the President a plan to strengthen enforcement and compliance mechanisms. The plan shall include proposals to:

(a) create a centralized complaint system for students receiving Federal military and veterans educational benefits to register complaints that can be tracked and responded to by the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, Justice, and Education, the CFPB, and other relevant agencies;

(b) institute uniform procedures for receiving and processing complaints across the State Approving Agencies (SAAs) that work with the Department of Veterans Affairs to review participating institutions, provide a coordinated mechanism across SAAs to alert the Department of Veterans Affairs to any complaints that have been registered at the State level, and create procedures for sharing information about complaints with the appropriate State officials, accrediting agency representatives, and the Secretary of Education;

(c) institute uniform procedures for referring potential matters for civil or criminal enforcement to the Department of Justice and other relevant agencies;

(d) establish procedures for targeted risk-based program reviews of institu-

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(e) establish new uniform rules and strengthen existing procedures for access to military installations by educational institutions. These new rules should ensure, at a minimum, that only those institutions that enter into a memorandum of agreement pursuant to section 3(a) of this order are permitted entry onto a Federal military installation for the purposes of recruitment. The Department of Defense shall include specific steps for instructing installation commanders on commercial solicitation rules and the requirement of the Principles outlined in section 2(c) of this order; and

(f) take all appropriate steps to ensure that websites and programs are not deceptively and fraudulently marketing educational services and benefits to program beneficiaries, including initiating a process to protect the term "GI Bill" and other military or veterans-related terms as trademarks, as appropriate.

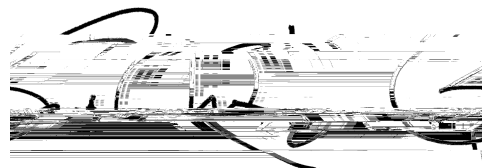
Sec. 5. *P*. (a) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department, agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.



THE WHITE HOUSE,
27, 2012.