



2025

POLICY PRIORITIES

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AMPLIFY SVA'S VOICE

The **2025 policy priorities** for Student Veterans of America® (SVA) build upon our unwavering commitment to empower student veterans and military-connected students as they transition to, through, and beyond higher education. By proactively addressing the evolving needs of our community, these priorities tackle the challenges faced by student veterans, military-connected students, their families, caregivers, and survivors. Through advocating for transformative policies that bolster academic support, enrich career pathways, and nurture holistic well-being, SVA seeks to ensure all those we serve realize their full potential and thrive in academia, the workforce, and every facet of life.

In identifying and prioritizing today's most urgent issues, SVA strives to drive impactful advocacy and deliver meaningful support. We invite policymakers, educators, and fellow advocates to join us in championing these initiatives - together, we can amplify SVA's voice and shape a brighter future for those who have served.



Jared S. Lyon

National President & CEO

VA EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS

Reform

Comprehensively reform elements of the G.I. Bill, including a review and update of the monthly housing allowance (“MHA”) to achieve parity with U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) basic allowance for housing (“BAH”).

Revise

Revise MHA for online students to provide allowance equal to national median of the monthly amount of the BAH payable under section 403 of title 37 for a member with dependents in pay grade E–5 and reintroduce VA authority to grant waivers for extenuating circumstances when students are forced to switch from in-person to online instruction.

Reinstate

Reinstate “break pay” into education benefits, which had been critical to the success and well-being of student veterans and their families.



VA EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS

Improve

Address concerns with the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program by improving its processes and personnel standards to ensure accountability and consistency for eligible veterans.

Improve the VA Work Study program to increase pay and expand job opportunities – to include at congressional office sites – so they better align with student academic and post-graduation goals.

Address negative impacts of institutional administrative burdens by reviewing VA education policies for inefficiencies and by exploring ways to add more School Certifying Officials (SCO) on campuses.

Restore

Protect and restore study abroad opportunities for G.I. Bill and Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) students.

Expand, monitor, and improve the VA VET TEC program.

VA EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS

Support

Support students serving in the National Guard and Reserve:

- Ensure members of the National Guard and Reserve performing the same duties as active-duty personnel receive equivalent education benefits
- Expand protections for National Guard and Reserve members who face short-term deployments and training obligations during their studies.





NONTRADITIONAL STUDENT SUCCESS

1. Better integrate and support VA healthcare on campuses, particularly through the VA Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) program.
2. Call for additional funding for VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) locations and veteran centers.
3. Explore ways to modernize federal student financial aid to account for the unique circumstances of transitioning service members and veterans.
4. Identify and establish better support for nontraditional students' basic needs, including food, shelter, childcare, and social support.
 - Explore modifications to the Childcare Aware program, the Americorps Childcare Benefits program, or other federal subsidized childcare program(s) to support childcare during extended hours (e.g., nights and weekends).
 - Support the expansion of reliable broadband internet by investing in critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, distance learning, telehealth, innovative technologies to reduce deployment costs and increase speeds, and the expansion of middle-mile broadband infrastructure to connect national and regional internet backbones with schools, businesses, residences, and other local connection sites.



Many veterans rely on higher education to transition into civilian careers, but without proper support, they face challenges that can delay graduation or derail their goals. Providing access to affordable childcare, flexible academic policies, and strong mental health and career services is essential to their success. By removing these barriers, Congress can strengthen the workforce, support military families, and uphold our commitment to those who have served.

**-Tammy Barlet,
SVA VP of Government Affairs**

1.

Protect Students

Ensure protections for student veterans under the Gainful Employment rule, the Borrower Defense rule (including restitution of used G.I. Bill benefits), Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, and the Total and Permanent Disability discharge.

STRENGTHEN HIGHER EDUCATION



2.

Higher Ed Act

Pass a comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, empowering the higher education triad to prevent predatory practices across all education sectors.

3.

Defend 90/10 Rule

Defend the improved 90/10 Rule, which now properly counts VA and DoD education benefits as federal education funds.

4.

Trends in Higher Ed

Improve oversight and accountability of trends in higher education, such as institutional conversions, online program management, and lending practices.



TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

1 Public Data

Improve data collection and data sharing practices across government agencies and call for more publicly available data – including timelier and more accurate annual reporting and better categorization of the total number of transitioning service members.

2 Debt Data

Call for improved data on how student debt impacts student veterans, service members, and their families.

3 Socioeconomic Degrees

Shed light on the differing socioeconomic circumstance and the economic outlook disparity between veterans and non-veterans holding bachelor's degrees.



TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

4 Regular Reporting

Institutionalize accountability standards by providing regular reports to Congress and third-party stakeholders, implementing department-level and congressional oversight, and conducting annual reviews of program processes. Support ongoing improvements to the DoD Tuition Assistance (TA) DECIDE and the G.I. Bill Comparison and Feedback Tools. Ensure the reporting system for colleges and universities accurately verifies complaint(s) and tracks improvements following risk-based surveys.

5 SIV Program

Continue to support the permanent status for Afghans who have entered the United States since August 2021 under the SIV program and create a pathway for those who were injured during their service in support of the U.S. in Afghanistan.



VA MODERNIZATION

Transition

Prioritize the successful transition of service members into civilian life through collaborative programs and services, to include the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), with increased participation from the U.S. Department of Education and earlier access to other organizations who support military transition and the well-being of transitioning service members and their families.

Monitor

Monitor VA's ongoing efforts to modernize IT, communications systems, and electronic health records, paying close attention to each initiative's rollout and how these upgrades affect G.I. Bill users' academic progress.





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