

Greetings,

This email is in reference to the recent EANGUS article about the 85/15 Rule. I was a recent casualty of this rule.

I successfully completed my undergraduate degree several years ago and then decided to get my Master's Degree in Criminal Justice/Homeland Security. Due to military exercises and training courses I had to re-apply a couple of times in order to continue with my program. I currently hold a 4.0 GPA.

About halfway through my graduate program I was told that I could no longer use my VA benefits for tuition due to the 85/15 Rule. I was told by several ranking school officials that they had reached their limit on VA students within my degree program and they could not let me continue receiving my VA benefits under that specific program. They said I could switch degree programs, which I thought was absolutely ridiculous. I wasn't able to complete my degree and just stopped attending because I couldn't afford the tuition without VA tuition assistance.

Why should I have to go to another school or switch degree programs and start all over again after completing several graduate level courses? Now, I am currently deployed to Afghanistan for my third combat tour with no degree and no hope of completing it while this rule is in effect.

I just don't understand who comes up with these ideas and how they think it is a benefit to the end user. This only hurts veterans like myself, and our ability to increase our earning potential and quality of life for our families. They definitely don't consider the service member when implementing such disastrous laws.

I have already lost five brothers in arms since deploying here a month ago and my focus should be on coming home alive and with all my limbs and not worrying about how I am going to complete my degree program while this imprudent rule is in effect.

I'm sure this ultimately has to do with the VA saving money at the service member's expense. I'm sure there will be more American lives lost (hopefully not my own) during my combat tour here and the VA should be reminded about the sacrifices our service members make every day especially while deployed in support of freedom and liberty for all people.

The VA, like many other organizations in America, have lost sight of their principal and fundamental justification for existence which is providing exceptional service to the men and women of this nation that have served faithfully and in many cases have made the ultimate sacrifice.