

Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success

Issue: Competitive grant opportunities established by H.R. 4137, The Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110-315) do not receive Congressional funding.

Background: Part T of Title VIII of Public Law 110-315 established competitive grant opportunities for Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) and created support programs known as Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS). Unfortunately, the competitive grant opportunities are not Congressionally funded. Several programs authorized under Title VIII support the goals of improving access to postsecondary education and improving enrollment, persistence, and completion rates. These programs seek to address the postsecondary education needs of specific groups of prospective or current postsecondary students. Specifically, Part T authorizes competitive grants to support Student Veterans' academic, financial, physical, and social needs.

In order to qualify for these competitive grants, IHEs must:

- Establish a CEVSS to provide a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services for Student Veterans;
- Establish a Student Veteran support team with representatives from admissions, registration, financial aid, veterans benefits, academic advising, student health, personal or mental health counseling, career advising, disabilities services, and any other office of the institution that provides support to Student Veterans on campus;
- Provide a program coordinator;
- Monitor Student Veteran enrollment, persistence, and completion rates; and
- Develop a sustainment plan

Part T of Title VIII currently has no funding to incentivize IHEs to create these centers, even though such campus programs would greatly help Student Veterans overcome the hurdles they face as nontraditional students at traditional IHEs.

Recommendation: The Veterans Education Project urges the 116th Congress to fund competitive grant opportunities established by Public Law 110-315 to establish Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success at Institutions of Higher Education.