



July 18, 2019

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Inhofe and Smith and Ranking Members Reed and Thornberry:

On behalf of the American Association of Cosmetology Schools (AACCS), I write today in strong opposition to Rep. Donna Shalala's amendment to the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). As conferees are appointed to negotiate the final 2020 NDAA, AACCS urges you to oppose the adoption of Rep. Shalala's amendment in the final bill, as the amendment as written unfairly targets proprietary schools and the active military students that some AACCS member schools serve.

While Rep. Shalala's amendment purports to protect the military community, in actuality it targets proprietary schools by creating an uneven playing field with an unfair advantage given to public and nonprofit schools. The amendment requires the Department of Defense to audit proprietary educational institutions that fail the U.S. Department of Education financial responsibility score, however the amendment fails to include extend this audit responsibility to all institutions of higher education – no matter what tax status – that fail the financial responsibility score. If enacted, this would present significant consequences for thousands of active duty servicemembers and their family members who choose to pursue their postsecondary education at cosmetology school and other career and vocational schools. Universal transparency and high standards must be the goal for every institution of higher education. However, this standard should be met by all institutions.

The cosmetology industry is among the fastest growing sectors in our economy – expected to grow nearly twice as fast as the national average. Employers need and rely on our graduates to fill open jobs. Our industry employs over 1.2 million people across the country, including active duty service members who have opted to pursue a career in the rewarding fields of barbering and cosmetology. For AACCS members, it our goal to equip all students with the skills necessary to succeed in our thriving industry, and we are proud of our strong legacy of training active duty servicemembers to become skilled, licensed professionals who will go on to fill the tens of thousands of open jobs in our industry, or open a salon, spa or barbershop of their own.

AACCS members believe that holding institutions of higher education to the highest standards, and ensuring students and parents have all the necessary information to make informed enrollment and borrowing choices is

vital to the long-term success of both students and our schools. However, this amendment does not achieve this outcome and only serves to target proprietary schools. For this reason, we urge Congress to reconsider this amendment.

Once again, as conferees are appointed to negotiate the final 2020 NDAA, we urge you to oppose the inclusion of Rep. Shalala's amendment. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued attention to our national defense and those who serve our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Chow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kathy" and last name "Chow" clearly distinguishable.

Kathy Chow
Executive Director
American Association of Cosmetology Schools

CC: Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McCarthy,
Members of the House Armed Services Committee and Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee