

June 8, 2016

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter
U.S. Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Carter:

On behalf of the American Council on Education (ACE), and the nearly 1,800 two- and four-year, public and private colleges and universities we represent, I write to express concern with the Navy's plan to close all or most of the CONUS Navy College Offices by October 2016—a proposal outlined in the Program Objective Memorandum for 2017.

Since its creation in 1918, ACE has worked with the higher education community to support military-connected students in their efforts to pursue and attain a postsecondary education. Through our support of a variety of initiatives, we have seen, first-hand, the positive role that pre-enrollment advisement has on the ability of service members and veterans to successfully achieve their postsecondary goals.

From 2007-14, ACE provided individualized academic support to severely injured service members during their recovery process through its Severely Injured Military Veterans: Fulfilling Their Dreams (SIMV) program. ACE's academic advisor assisted veterans with developing educational plans and identifying institutions that provided the best fit for their personal circumstances and educational goals, and provided additional support for navigating the application and admissions process. Through this program, more than 750 service members and veterans were able to identify, apply to, and gain admittance to higher education institutions.

Building on the success of SIMV, ACE has hosted two summits that focused specifically on pre-enrollment advisement strategies for military-connected students. With the aid of insights from research and key stakeholders, including representatives from federal agencies, higher education institutions, military-connected students, military and veteran service organizations, and corporate employers, these summits have yielded many promising practices for helping military-connected students achieve their academic goals. But without question, the number one key takeaway from this work has

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been **the importance of providing individualized, flexible, and relationship-centered, pre-enrollment support for military-connected students.**

This type of pre-enrollment advising provides service members with the tools to choose the college or university best suited to their needs and best able to help them reach their goals. Providing quality, high-touch pre-enrollment advising is critical to ensuring positive outcomes for students and that the federal investment in education benefits such as the Tuition Assistance program and the Post-9/11 GI bill is well spent. The pre-enrollment advising provided by the Navy College Offices is critical to guaranteeing students use their hard-earned education benefits wisely.

While we understand the many competing budget demands facing the Department of Defense and the Navy, we respectfully ask you work to identify resources that would allow the Navy College Offices to continue providing these vital services for the nation's Sailors.

We thank you for your service and for your steadfast support of our nation's service members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry W. Hartle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "H".

Terry W. Hartle
Senior Vice President

TWH/ldw

June 8, 2016

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
SR-228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John F. “Jack” Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
SR-228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed:

On behalf of the American Council on Education (ACE), and the nearly 1,800 two- and four-year, public and private colleges and universities we represent, I write to express concern with the Navy’s plan to close all or most of the CONUS Navy College Offices by October 2016—a proposal outlined in the Program Objective Memorandum for 2017.

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While we understand the many competing budget demands facing the Department of Defense and the Navy, we urge you to work with the Navy to find ways to allow the Navy College Offices to continue to provide these vital services for our Sailors.

We thank you for your service and for your steadfast support of our nation's service members.

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Senior Vice President

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June 8, 2016

The Honorable William McClellan “Mac” Thornberry
Chairman
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6035

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6035

Dear Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith:

On behalf of the American Council on Education (ACE), and the nearly 1,800 two- and four-year, public and private colleges and universities we represent, I write to express concern with the Navy’s plan to close all or most of the CONUS Navy College Offices by October 2016—a proposal outlined in the Program Objective Memorandum for 2017.

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