



June 22, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Katherine Clark
Democratic Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Scalise, Leader Jeffries, and Whip Clark:

On behalf of associations representing thousands of aviation businesses, hundreds of thousands of pilots, and state government aviation agencies, we express our appreciation for the House’s ongoing efforts to improve the delivery of veterans’ educational benefits. However, we write to express our strong opposition to H.R. 5634, the *Veterans Flight Training Responsibility Act of 2026*, due to provisions that would significantly limit veterans’ ability to pursue flight training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

We respectfully urge House leadership not to advance the bill on the House floor or include it in any larger legislative package.

The bill, as amended, would impose a maximum aggregate cap of \$119,684 on GI Bill payments for flight training. Given the cost and specialized nature of civilian flight training programs, this cap would be insufficient to cover the full cost of training for most veterans. As a result, veterans would likely be forced to either discontinue their flight training or take on significant personal debt to complete their programs.

Aviation is a vital industry, supporting over four percent of the U.S. GDP and providing more than 9.4 million jobs. The aviation sector is in dire need of qualified pilots, and veterans are among the best candidates to fill this demand. Flight training programs are essential in producing the next generation of commercial pilots, helicopter operators, air ambulance crews, and other critical aviation roles. Limiting veterans’ benefits through a cap would restrict their access to these crucial career opportunities at a time when the industry needs them most.

We are also concerned that the bill would uniquely limit veterans pursuing aviation careers by imposing a specific statutory cap on flight training that does not apply to other educational pathways under the GI Bill. This approach creates disparate outcomes for veterans based solely on career choice, rather than need or merit, and restricts access to professions that are both in high demand and critical to public safety and economic growth.

We remain committed to working with Congress to ensure that veterans can access the benefits they were promised, and that they can pursue careers in aviation without financial obstacles.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge House leadership not to advance H.R. 5634 on the House floor or include it in any larger legislative package.

Sincerely,

Air Medical Operators Association

Airborne Public Safety Association

Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

Airlines for America

Experimental Aircraft Association

National Air Carrier Association

National Association of State Aviation Officials

National Air Transportation Association

National Business Aviation Association

Regional Airline Association

Vertical Aviation International