

Durbin calls on Senate to pass bill to extend G.I. housing benefits for veterans affected by ITT Tech closure

September 20 2016 8:44 PM



WASHINGTON – In light of the recent closure of ITT Educational Services, Inc. (ITT Tech), U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today spoke on the Senate floor about the need to pass the Veterans Education Relief and Reinstatement Act (VERRA) to temporarily extend G.I. Bill housing benefits to veterans whose schools abruptly close. The bill could help ITT Tech veterans who lost this critical benefit and now may be in danger of losing their homes due to the closure of ITT Tech.

“When it closed earlier this month, an estimated 7,000 veterans were enrolled at , which has now gone out of business. Not only have these veterans used up part, or in some cases, all of their limited G.I. bill education benefits, some of them relied on V.A. housing assistance to pay their rent and afford a place to live for themselves and their families. Veterans can only receive this housing stipend if they are enrolled in a school that qualifies for G.I. bill benefits, so the closure of ITT Tech has put these veterans and their families at risk of being unable to afford their current housing, disrupting their lives,” said Senator Durbin. “I support a bipartisan bill introduced by my colleagues, Senators Blumenthal and Tillis, to reinstate G.I. bill education benefits in certain cases and give the Secretary of the V. A. the authority to temporarily extend housing benefits to vets, including those who attended ITT Tech. The closure of ITT Tech makes the need to pass urgent.

Video of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#).

[Senator Durbin recently joined 22 senators](#) in calling for the Department of Education to “use its existing legal authority to increase the total debt relief to former ITT Tech students.” The letter also urged the Department of Education to work with the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that veterans who were enrolled at ITT Tech are able to make informed decisions about how to best use any remaining GI Bill benefits.

ITT Tech, which declared bankruptcy last week, operated four campuses in Illinois – three in the Chicagoland and one in Springfield. The company is under investigation by at least 18 state Attorneys General, including Illinois’ Lisa Madigan, for a variety of misleading and deceptive practices and is being sued by the New Mexico Attorney General, Massachusetts Attorney General, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and Securities and Exchange Commission.