



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 28, 2012

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta  
Secretary  
Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1400

The Honorable Arne Duncan  
Secretary  
Department of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

The Honorable Richard Cordray  
Director  
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau  
1700 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20552

**Re: Executive Order 13607 – Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions  
Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses and Other Family Members**

Dear Secretaries Panetta, Duncan and Shinseki and Director Cordray:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) which represents the administrations, faculty, and students of the nation's osteopathic colleges which offer the doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO) degree, I am writing to seek clarification on the recent Executive Order (EO) – Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses and Other Family Members.

There are 29 colleges of osteopathic medicine at 37 locations in 28 states. Many osteopathic medical schools educate high numbers of our nation's service members and veterans. AACOM supports many of the overarching principles stated in the EO and look forward to working with the Departments of Defense (DoD), Education (ED), Veterans (VA), and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to progress the educational involvement of our nation's service members, veterans, and their family

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members. While AACOM believes in the overall premise of the principles, we have numerous concerns regarding the implementation of these principles and the impact it will have on our membership. Our schools' ability to respond to the VA's request for a committed intent to make a good faith effort to comply with the principles necessitates a need to review specific implementation details. Therefore, we urge an extension of the June 30, 2012 deadline for response.

Furthermore, AACOM supports service members, veterans, their spouses and family members to have access to and be informed of all financial aid options, however this could cause a heavy burden on the schools' Financial Aid Officers since most students are either unaware or don't specify that they are eligible for certain financial aid prior to enrollment. In addition, we support the role of medical schools to provide guidance and career counseling while attending school, however it becomes a challenge for medical schools to provide this guidance to students who graduate and enter into medical residency training programs. Successful completion of a residency program is required for specialty board certification.

Moreover, AACOM has concerns with the broad nature of the principles and believe that there should be further clarification on how the federal agencies will interpret and implement these principles. AACOM's membership, the nation's colleges of osteopathic medicine, need to thoroughly understand and be informed before committing to comply with the principles. We look forward to working together and are committed to ensuring that our nation's service members, veterans, their spouses, and other family members receive the educational experience they deserve. Please feel free to contact Pamela Murphy, Director of Government Relations, at 301-968-4151 or [pmurphy@aacom.org](mailto:pmurphy@aacom.org) if you need additional information or have questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SC Shannon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Stephen C. Shannon, DO, MPH  
President and CEO