



Dear Secretary Wormuth,

I write to you today on behalf of myself and the Special Operations Association of America, to strongly urge you not to cut the Army's tuition assistance program. This is vital tool not only to draw in recruits, but to retain them as well. With more focus on formal education for enlisted Service Members needed for promotion and career progression, tuition assistance is a fundamental incentive.

In 2023, more than hundred thousand soldiers used the tuition assistance program and cost the Army approximately \$278 million. Of the Army's \$185.9 billion proposed budget for fiscal year 2025, assuming the tuition assistance utilization remains steady around \$278 million, represents 0.15% of the budget. This is a small investment into the stated priority "Taking Care of People" outlined in the Army's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Overview.

I am not only an advocate for this program, but a two-time beneficiary for both my bachelor's and master's degree while serving on active duty. The financial burden on a Non-Commissioned Officer's salary would have been staggering without tuition assistance. I am certain that I would not have had opportunities afforded to me upon separating from the Army without the formal education paid for by my service and the tuition assistance program.

I reiterate our desire for you to keep the tuition assistance program in place. The further education and progress of America's current and future soldiers depends on it. Thank you.

David Cook
Executive Director
Special Operations Association of America