

Expansion of GI Benefits for the Guard and Reserve

Fiscal Year 2026 Fact Sheet



NGAUS



The Issue

Since 9/11, the National Guard has transitioned from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve. Reserve and Active-duty service members train and deploy in unison for wildfires, hurricanes, overseas operations, and more. National Guard deployments have increased exponentially, from 818,496 days in 2006 to 9.5 million days in 2021. Currently, Guardsmen receive post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for Title 10 orders and only Title 32 in response to a national emergency declared by the President of the United States. As such, Guard members often serve alongside Active-duty and do not receive the same benefits.

Guardsmen attend a training course during Cybershield 2023, Camp Joseph T. Robinson, AR.

Background

The GI Bill is the most significant piece of federal legislation ever produced, providing educational opportunities to the greatest generation and vaulting America to unprecedented economic growth. President H.W. Bush exalted its impact, saying, "The GI bill changed the lives of millions by replacing old roadblocks with the path of opportunity." Seventy-nine years later, Guardsmen are still running into roadblocks while in uniform as they do not accrue the same GI Bill benefits as the Active Component, even when they take on the same job with the same risks. We believe a day in uniform is a day in service to our country, regardless of status.

In 2020, the National Guard was deployed more often and for longer periods than at any time since World War II. Educational opportunity and achievement fuel economic growth and help our nation compete. We support the passage of the Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act. It is time to finally provide the right-sized education benefits for the operational National Guard.

Recommendation

The National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) urges Congress to:

- Support S. 649 and H.R. 1423 – The Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2025 to expand post-9/11 GI Bill education assistance to cover all Title 32, including AT and IDT.



Learn more at
ngaus.org

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