Congressional Budget Office
Cost Estimate

June 11, 2026

H.R. 5634, Veterans Flight Training Responsibility Act of 2026

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on May 14, 2026

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2026	2026-2031	2026-2036
Direct Spending (Outlays)	*	-3	-6
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	*	-3	-6
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	3	3

Increases *net direct spending* in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2037?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes
Increases *on-budget deficits* in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2037?	No	**Mandate Effects**	
		Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

* = between -$500,000 and $500,000.

H.R. 5634 would limit education benefits paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for flight training programs. The costs of those benefits are paid from mandatory appropriations. CBO estimates that enacting the bill would decrease direct spending by $6 million and increase spending subject to appropriation by $3 million, over the 2026-2036 period. The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 700 (veterans benefits and services). For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumed that the bill would be enacted late in fiscal year 2026.

Direct Spending

H.R. 5634 would limit the maximum amount of tuition and fees that VA would pay to public educational institutions on behalf of beneficiaries of the Post-9/11 GI Bill who enroll in flight training programs.

Currently, VA pays an amount equivalent to in-state tuition and fees at public educational institutions for students enrolled in degree-granting programs of education. Benefits are paid for up to 36 months of enrollment in approved programs and can include housing allowances and book stipends. Although there are practical limitations, there is no specified cap on the

total amount of benefits that can be paid for a person attending a public institution under current law.

Table 1.
Estimated Budgetary Effects of H.R. 5634

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars												
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2026-2031	2026-2036
Decreases (-) in Direct Spending													
Estimated Budget Authority	*	-1	*	-1	*	-1	*	-1	*	-1	-1	-3	-6
Estimated Outlays	*	-1	*	-1	*	-1	*	-1	*	-1	-1	-3	-6
Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation													
Estimated Authorization	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Estimated Outlays	*	2	1	*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3

* = between -$500,000 and $500,000.

The bill would limit the amount of tuition and fee payments for students who first enroll in a flight training program at a public institution in or after the 2026-2027 academic year to a lifetime total of nearly $120,000 (increased each year thereafter to account for inflation). Limiting total payments for the tuition and fees of flight training would reduce benefit costs under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. On the basis of data from VA, CBO estimates that annual benefit payments for roughly 15 flight trainees would be reduced by an average of about $35,000 over the next 10 years. Consequently, enacting the bill would decrease direct spending by $6 million over the 2026-2036 period, CBO estimates.

Spending Subject to Appropriation

Implementing the limit on flight training benefits would require changes to the information technology systems used by VA to manage education benefits. On the basis of information from VA, CBO estimates that those changes would cost $3 million over the 2026-2036 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Paul B.A. Holland. The estimate was reviewed by Chad Chirico, Director of Budget Analysis.

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