



February 17, 2011

Mr. Robert D. Reischauer
The Urban Institute
President
2100 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037

**Re: Harvard University ROTC and Yellow
Ribbon Program**

Dear Mr. Reischauer:

I know that you and other members of the Corporation take pride in Harvard's storied service to the nation. No other school, outside of the service academies, can boast of seventeen alumni who won the Medal of Honor and countless others who have risked their lives for America. With that in mind, we come to you now with a modest request.

We ask simply that the Corporation commit Harvard to official recognition of ROTC. That can be done by the Corporation immediately—whether or not there is an official ROTC unit on campus.

We know that mustering the numbers needed to sustain a cost-effective campus ROTC unit at Harvard will take time. Taxpayers, not to mention ROTC's critics, will be taking note. But that should not prevent the Corporation from immediately granting recognition to Harvard's existing ROTC program and designating space for its presence on campus.

We believe that granting recognition will, indeed, lay the groundwork for greater student participation in ROTC. For years, Harvard's campus culture, despite the best efforts of President Faust and President Summers, has discouraged participation. Alumni and others have noted Harvard's refusal to award academic credit for ROTC coursework, the lack of ROTC annex space at Harvard, and Harvard's withholding of institutional financial resources. Yet more troubling is the neglectful attitude that the US military members sometimes encounter, as Harvard NROTC alumnus Captain Paul E. Mawn USN (Ret.) H '63 and columnist Kevin Cullen recently recounted in the *Boston Globe*. As Mawn told *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "Harvard University needs to promote a climate of awareness, as well as acceptance of the military's being considered as a form of public service." The nation, mindful of President Obama's support for ROTC, is watching: Will you act?

Once the Corporation recognizes ROTC, you can call upon the faculty and administration to determine how best to create and sustain a thriving campus unit or units. And even if Harvard elects not to establish an on-campus ROTC unit, the faculty could—and should—devise a rigorous set of ROTC courses so that Harvard's participating students can not only take those courses at their home institution, but also receive credit for them. To see how to do this, the

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faculty has only to look to MIT. MIT's faculty has forged a strong working relationship with ROTC, hosting on-campus units and, in some cases, allowing students to earn academic credit for ROTC courses. Harvard has made some tentative steps in this direction, allowing some naval seminar courses to count toward the undergraduate degree. But most ROTC courses may only be taken at MIT, and only on a non-credit basis. Surely, Harvard can do much more.

Working with the Department of Defense, a Harvard administration that welcomes ROTC might well be able to work out administrative efficiencies that would streamline structure and reduce costs. Along the way, Harvard would send a powerful signal to other highly selective academic institutions around the nation. That is to say, restoring ROTC to campus would benefit Harvard in many ways. Those benefits begin with a simple vote by the Corporation.

While faculty would have to work closely with the administration to frame a timetable for the changes proposed, strong leadership by the Corporation is crucial for moving the initiative forward. After all, the Corporation—and not the faculty—is ultimately responsible for decisions regarding student life and public service.

We ask for your leadership on one additional matter: extending participation in the GI Bill Yellow Ribbon Program. In 2009, only six undergraduate students at Harvard benefited from the Yellow Ribbon program, according to a June 18, 2009 article in the *Crimson*. Participation in 2010 seems to have dropped to only two undergraduate students, according to the February 18, 2010 *Harvard Gazette*.

Contrast this limited showing with that of Columbia's School of General Studies. Columbia has reached out proactively and has enrolled over 300 veterans. Among these veterans, dozens of undergraduates currently participate in the Yellow Ribbon program, with a maximum university grant of \$7,000 per year for up to 300 students. We also understand that there are robust Yellow Ribbon programs, with strong undergraduate opportunities, at Dartmouth and at other Ivy League universities.

We understand that students' limited participation may be due to Harvard's interpretation of Ivy scholarship rules, which were written for the laudable purpose of avoiding bidding wars for top student scholars or athletes. But Harvard's implementation of those rules may have the unintended consequence of limiting service-based undergraduate scholarships. Given that our veterans put their lives at risk for the nation, and given President Faust's recent remarks in support of veteran students, it is appropriate that scholarships supporting veterans receive separate and special consideration. We ask you to ensure that Harvard's application of the rules is not impeding its ability to support veterans.

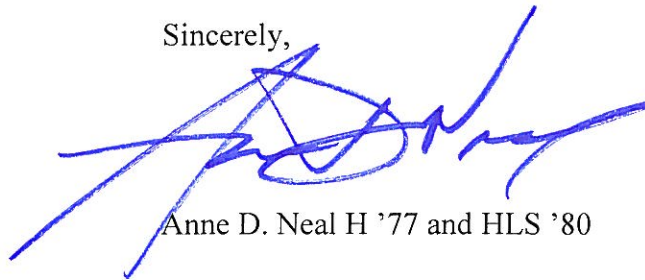
Now is the time for proactive efforts at Harvard to make the campus accessible and welcoming to students who commit themselves to military service in defense of our liberties. We hope that you and your fellow members of the Corporation will call for the immediate recognition of

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ROTC, reinstate institutional financial support, enlist the faculty for the important work outlined above, and examine the existing Ivy scholarship rules and financial aid procedures to ensure that the benefits of the Yellow Ribbon Program are readily available to Harvard undergraduates.

We hope you will move swiftly and look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 467-6787 or aneal@goacta.org if you would like to discuss these matters further. Thank you for your service to Harvard.

Sincerely,



Anne D. Neal H '77 and HLS '80

cc: Drew G. Faust, President, Harvard University
Nannerl O. Keohane, Fellow, Harvard Corporation
Patricia A. King, Fellow, Harvard Corporation
William F. Lee, Fellow, Harvard Corporation
James F. Rothenberg, Treasurer, Harvard University
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William R. Fitzsimmons, Director of Admissions and Financial Aid