

The best pieces of legislation, the servicemen's act of 1944

[Law](#)



The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 is considered one of the best pieces of legislation to emerge from the Second World War (White). This Act, known as the GI Bill, was signed into law on June 22, 1944, and has through the decades had a profound effect on American society (White). For example, more than 21 million veterans have received educational benefits and some 14 million have been able to purchase homes through the home-loan program (White). Sixty years later, the GI Bill is still a major source of veteran benefits and an attractive inducement for enlistments (White).

The World War II veterans were a generation that had grown up during the Depression Era, many living in tenement apartments and cold-water flats, or on rural farming communities and small towns (Mettler). Most of this generation expected to enter the same type of work as their fathers, however the GI Bill allowed them a remarkable opportunity to gain an education and the means to own their own home (Mettler). Some became teachers, electricians, engineers, college professors, physicians, scientists, and dentists (Mettler). This Bill literally changed the future of an entire generation (Mettler). Moreover, the GI Bill fueled the development of the middle class and revitalized American democracy, as many veterans joined fraternal groups and community organizations and became involved in postwar era politics (Mettler).

The GI Bill was the most far-reaching item of veterans' legislation that has been passed in the history of the United States, allowing low interest rates, and low or no down payment for homes and farms, in addition to low-interest loads for high education (Baby). The United States had endured the era of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, thus the World War II veterans were a

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generation that had been hardened by poverty, and many deprived of home and job security (Baby). The GI Bill allowed them to achieve the American Dream (Baby). Many of these veterans returned home from the War, married and started families, began and finished their education, bought their first homes and secured employment (Baby).

The GI Bill created a mass move to the suburbs, where veterans found suitable housing in the new tracts that sprawled on the outskirts of major cities (Baby). This postwar suburban housing boom began in a "planned community" called Levittown (Baby). "Levittowns are located in rural New York and Pennsylvania," and are named after developer William J. Levitt, who constructed the communities with "prefabricated units and mass production techniques, beginning in 1947" (Baby).

Soon large-scale, planned communities and housing tracts were being built throughout the United States, filled with young couples giving birth to a new generation, the Baby Boomers (Baby). Eventually, these suburban tracts were surrounded by new schools, strip malls and businesses, and became new communities and new townships (Baby). Farm and ranch land became seas of similar-looking homes, a trend that continues today (Baby).