

LINDA J. BILMES (Veterans-Related Bio)

Linda J. Bilmes, the Daniel Patrick Moynihan Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, is one of the leading experts in the country studying the costs of war, with particular focus on veterans and military casualties. She has written extensively on this topic, including the landmark 2007 paper, ["Soldiers Returning From Iraq and Afghanistan: The Long-term Costs of Providing Veterans Medical Care and Disability Benefits."](#), *KSG Working Paper No. RWP07-001* which has consistently been one of the most downloaded papers in the SSRN network. She is a contributor to the Eisenhower Institute/Brown University cost of war project: ["Current and Projected Future Costs of Caring for Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars."](#) (June, 2011, 2013, 2015). She has published on war costs and the implications for veterans funding: ["The Financial Legacy of Iraq and Afghanistan: How Wartime Spending Decisions Will Constrain Future National Security Budgets."](#) (HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP13-006, March 2013). In January 2016, she proposed the creation of a National Veterans Trust Fund, <http://democracyjournal.org/magazine/39/a-trust-fund-for-veterans/>, a proposal which has been endorsed by several Members of Congress.

Professor Bilmes has written extensively on war cost issues in books, book chapters and articles on the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, including the *New York Times* and international best-seller *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict* (co-authored with Joseph E. Stiglitz), which has been translated into 33 languages. She is also co-author of *The People Factor: Strengthening America by Investing in Public Service* (with W. Scott Gould, Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Veterans Affairs) and several other books. Her book chapters (with Joseph E. Stiglitz) include "The long-term costs of conflict: The case of the Iraq War" in the *Elgar Handbook on the Economics of Conflict* (2011); and "Estimating the Costs of War: Methodological Issues, with Applications to Iraq and Afghanistan" in the *Oxford Handbook of the Economics of Peace and Conflict* (2012). Her research has been featured in *American Legion Magazine*, *Stars and Stripes*, and *VFW* publications as well as *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, *the Atlantic*, *Boston Globe*, *Financial Times*, *Harvard Business Review* and *Foreign Policy*.

She currently serves on Board of Directors of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University and on the US Department of Labor Advisory Board on Veterans Employment, Training and Outreach. She served on the veterans' transition team for President Obama, and has testified numerous times on veterans issues before Congress:

- September 17, 2013: Testimony at National Veterans' Strategy Roundtable, US House of Representatives Veterans Affairs Committee - Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, Oversight and Investigations (closed hearing)
- July 10, 2013: Testimony before Massachusetts State Legislature Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs
- September 30, 2010: [Testimony before US House of Representatives Veterans Affairs Committee.](#)

- February 13, 2008 - [Testimony before the US House of Representatives Veterans Affairs Committee - Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs](#)
- May 23, 2007 - [Testimony before the US House of Representatives - Veterans Affairs Committee - VA Claims Roundtable Hearing](#)
- March 13, 2007 - [Testimony before the US House of Representatives - Veterans Affairs Committee - Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs](#)

She has also testified before the Presidential Commission on the Future of America's Veterans and the US Department of Veterans Affairs Disability Advisory Board, and has presented her research to numerous organizations, including the American Neurological Association, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, Veterans for Common Sense, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace, the American Economic Association, and the American Political Science Association.

Professor Bilmes is the recipient of a Department of Defense grant to write the history of the consolidation of Walter Reed Army Hospital and Bethesda Naval Hospital. She has written a three-part Harvard case study of this consolidation, and produced a short documentary film on the care of amputees at the hospital, which was selected as a finalist at the Chagrin documentary film festival. Her current research focuses on fiscal transparency in war funding, particularly understanding why standard budgetary and principal-agent constraints broke down in the funding of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, in comparison to the Vietnam and Korean wars. She also studies veterans' transition to civilian life and the performance of federal and state veterans' employment programs.

Bilmes is part of an interdisciplinary team led by UCSF Medical School in comparing data on recent veteran's injuries to data from the Vietnam Veterans Longitudinal Study. She has also assisted local communities in the Boston area to establish veterans' transition programs for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, and now serves on the Greater Boston Regional Veterans Advisory Board chaired by Congressman Seth Moulton.

Bilmes is a peer reviewer for the Institute of Medicine veterans' publications. She is the recipient of many awards and honors, including the 2008 "Speaking Truth to Power" Award by the American Friends Service Committee. She has been featured in numerous films and documentaries, including Charles Ferguson's academy-award nominated film "No End in Sight."

Bilmes is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a former Assistant Secretary and CFO of the US Department of Commerce, and a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. She holds a BA and MBA from Harvard University, and is the daughter of a World War II veteran.