

Processing of Applications for GI Bill Benefits to Begin Today; Eligible veterans able to apply online

Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) announced that veterans eligible for education benefits under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill are able to apply for benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs online beginning today.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) announced that veterans eligible for education benefits under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill are able to apply for benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs online beginning today. Members of the Armed Forces who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001, including activated reservists and members of the National Guard and their dependents, could receive up to 36 months of education benefits, including stipends for housing and books. Veterans will have 15 years after they leave active duty to use their education benefits.

"Providing for the education of those who serve in our Armed Forces is a national responsibility, and the new GI Bill renews our commitment to fulfilling that duty. My hope is that we provide for the future of veterans in Connecticut and across the country who have given so much to us - it's the right thing to do for veterans and their families, and the right thing to do for the future of our economy," said Murphy.

Applicants can apply through an online form at <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-1990-ARE.pdf>. Payments will be processed beginning August 3.

Today, veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan receive educational benefits that cover only about 60 percent of a public college education and 30 percent of a private college education from the federal government. Under the Post-9/11 GI Bill, service members returning from Iraq or Afghanistan who have served 36 months on active duty, would receive benefits to cover the costs of a four-year education up to the level of the most expensive in-state public school (\$9,886 for next year in Connecticut), along with a stipend for housing, books and other expenses.

Under the legislation:

- Service members, including those returning from Iraq or Afghanistan and including their dependents, can receive up to 36 months of education benefits, including stipends for housing and books.

- Veterans would have up to 15 years after they leave active duty to use their education benefits.
- Veterans would have the ability to use their benefits for program fees, tuition, books and housing.
- Veterans would be able to use the Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program, in which the federal government will match, dollar for dollar, any voluntary additional contributions to veterans from institutions whose tuition is more expensive than the maximum educational assistance provided under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.
- Benefits are applicable for apprenticeships, vocational schools, and other non-traditional post-secondary educational settings.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for our service men and women, and so I encourage any veteran who thinks he or she may be eligible for the new GI Bill to call my Connecticut office for assistance," said Murphy.

Murphy and his staff can be reached at 860-223-8412.

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