

Murphy Urges Connecticut Veterans with GI Bill Benefits to Access Emergency Checks from VA

Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) urged student veterans eligible for a special emergency payment of their Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits to apply online to access their benefits as soon as possible.

October 5, 2009

Contact: Kristen Bossi

NEW BRITAIN - Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) urged student veterans eligible for a special emergency payment of their Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits to apply online to access their benefits as soon as possible. The GI Bill for the 21st Century, which was passed by Congress and signed into law last year, provides a full, four-year college education to any veteran who has served since September 11, 2001 for a certain amount of time. Nationwide, more than 277,000 veterans and their eligible relatives applied for assistance but the Veterans Administration (VA) has fallen far behind in processing payments.

"A paperwork jam at the VA shouldn't force our veterans to go without the benefits they are owed and deserve. These emergency payments will take care of what we promised them when we passed the new GI Bill. And I'm going to be looking into how the VA can do better next semester," said Murphy.

Last week, the VA announced that starting on Friday, October 2, its 57 regional benefits offices will begin providing on-the-spot emergency payments up to \$3,000 to students who have applied for their education benefits but who have not yet received a government payment. Students can apply online for these emergency payments to be mailed to them if they are unable to pick them up at the Newington regional office. For those who would like pick up a check, they must bring a photo ID and evidence of their enrollment, such as a course schedule, to the nearest Regional Office. The Newington office will be open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekdays for advance payments.

The emergency checks are an advance on each student's education benefits, and the amount will be deducted from future benefits payments. A \$3,000 payment is the maximum in emergency education benefits, with many veterans receiving smaller payments based upon their likely monthly education benefits.

Murphy has been contacted by several veterans in the Fifth District who have had trouble getting their payments and has been able to help them navigate the system. If you need assistance, please call Stephanie Podewell on Murphy's staff, at 860-223-8412.

The most updated information regarding VA issuing emergency checks will be available on the VA's Web site <http://www.va.gov/>.

#