



VFW Applauds VA GI Bill Check Authorization

VFW National Commander issues 'Call to Action' to assist student veterans

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. has voiced support on the decision by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs authorizing checks for up to \$3,000 to students who have applied for educational benefits and who have not yet received their government payment. The checks will be distributed to eligible students at VA regional benefits offices across the country starting Oct. 2, 2009.

"We are extremely pleased with Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki's announcement that VA is moving positively in response to recent reports of veterans experiencing financial difficulty or problems enrolling for college classes since the implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill." said VFW National Commander Thomas J. Tradewell Sr. "This clearly demonstrates Secretary Shinseki's concern and willingness to take action on behalf of the student veteran community." The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. will continue to dialogue with the secretary and the Department of Veterans Affairs in order to ensure college-bound veterans receive the education entitlements they have earned."

Starting Friday, Oct. 2, 2009, students can go to one of VA's 57 regional offices: www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/offices.asp with a photo ID, a course schedule and an eligibility certificate to request advance payment of their housing and book allowance. Because not all these offices are located near students, VA expects to send representatives to schools with large veteran-student bodies and work with Veteran Service Organizations to help students with transportation needs.

Subsequently, VFW National Commander Tradewell has issued a 'call to action' by asking VFW Posts nationwide to mobilize their resources on behalf of student veterans and assist those needing transportation to a VA regional office or college campus.

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“Today, I urge every VFW Post to reach-out to their respective student veteran communities. One easy way to do this is to first determine if there is a Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter on campus. The SVA has a chapter locator that can be accessed by going to their website: <http://www.studentveterans.org/chapters/chapterlocator.php> and makes it easy to contact the student group and offer assistance. Since one of the SVA’s primary goals is to connect with groups with resources from outside their campuses to help meet the common needs of student veterans, they can help coordinate with VFW Posts and students needing transportation assistance. Otherwise, I encourage any VFW Post with a college campus anywhere in their vicinity, to contact the campus veterans representative or Dean’s office to help facilitate assistance.”

The VFW began lobbying Congress in 1997 to update the 20-year-old peacetime Montgomery GI Bill with 21st century tuition realities. The VFW did this by testifying at more than 40 congressional committee hearings, through hundreds of VFW Legislative Committee member visits to every House and Senate office in Washington and within their home states, and through the grassroots lobbying effort of VFW and Auxiliary members and VFW Posts nationwide. This intense effort proved successful with the eventual passage and signing on June 30, 2008 of Public Law #110-252.

[Secretary Shinseki Announces Ability to Sign Up for Emergency Education Benefit Payments on VA Web-Site this Friday](#)