

VA Bears Responsibility to Make Student Veterans Whole, Says VFW

National Commander calls on VA to give student veterans the benefits they deserve

Nov 29, 2018

The Department of Veterans Affairs released a statement yesterday regarding the implementation of Forever GI Bill changes that were supposed to have been enacted this past August. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie has now directed the Veterans Benefits Administration to cease attempting to implement the changes and instead reset the entire effort in order to get the job done correctly. The reset begins this Saturday, with the full implementation date now shifting to December 2019. Student veterans are expected to see positive effects of the changes in the spring 2020 semester.

“The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States was disappointed to learn about the 12-month delay in implementing this amazing benefit, but we recognize why hitting the reset button was necessary in order for the VA to get this right,” said VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence.

The Forever GI Bill changed student housing allowances to reflect the ZIP codes where students attend the majority of their classes. This change was required to go into effect on Aug. 1, 2018, but the VA admits that its antiquated computer system was unable to simultaneously handle individual ZIP code changes and the influx of students registering for the fall semester.

“Shifting the implementation deadline a year isn’t a free pass for the VA to arbitrarily pay student veterans less than they are due simply because it was unable to correct internal problems in time,” said Lawrence. “I appreciated hearing the VBA undersecretary in testimony this morning address the need to make student veterans whole, and I pledge that the VFW will continue to push for the proper implementation of the Forever GI Bill so that all student veterans receive the prompt and full benefits they earned and deserve,” he said.

[Read the VA press release here.](#)

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