

CONGRESSMAN

MIKE ROGERS

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Veterans Update

■ **CONGRESS APPROVES COST OF LIVING INCREASE FOR VETERANS**

Congress approved one of the largest increases in the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for veterans in recent memory. For those veterans who are 100 percent disabled, their compensation will increase by approximately \$1,100 for 2006, up from \$27,588 to \$28,716. The increase is effective as of January 1, 2006.

Nearly 2.6 million veterans with service-connected disabilities will benefit from these efforts. Among the veterans estimated to receive such compensation are twelve World War I veterans; 347,126 World War II veterans; 162,549 Korean-conflict veterans; 944,799 Vietnam-era veterans; and 639,690 veterans of the Persian Gulf War era.

Surviving spouses of veterans whose deaths were service-connected and their children will benefit from the increase, as will surviving spouses who are so disabled that they need aid or are permanently housebound. The funding increase will also benefit surviving children who are between 18 and 22 and are seeking higher education in an approved educational program.

■ **PURPLE HEART OFFERS NEW JOB TRAINING PROGRAM**

A new training program for unemployed veterans being offered by the Purple Heart Foundation and I would like to encourage all veterans to explore this new opportunity.

There are more than 221,000 veterans who have been deemed unemployable by the Department of Veterans Affairs. I am pleased that the Military Order of the Purple Heart Service Foundation has stepped up to help veterans with disabilities get the training and support they need to reenter the workforce.

The Purple Heart Foundation's new initiative is called the "Business Training Center" and will provide remote and virtual in-home national training in the near future. The 15-week program will provide 600 hours of training for positions in the information industry.

For additional information, contact Ken Smith at the Military Order of the Purple Heart Service Foundation at (703) 340-8763 or online at <http://www.purpleheartfoundation.org>.

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