



News From The ...

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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Congressional Accomplishments In Support of Veterans Spanning Past 4 Years

☑ **Veterans Budget Increased \$20 Billion in 4 Years**

The total VA budget has been increased from \$48 billion in FY 2001 to an estimated \$68 billion in FY 2005, a 42% increase in just four years.

☑ **Veterans Medical Care Funding Increased 38% in 4 Years**

Veterans medical care funding has risen from \$21.7 billion in the FY 2001 budget to an estimated \$29.9 billion in FY 2005.

☑ **Record Number of Veterans Receiving Health Care Today**

As a result nearly 5 million veterans will receive health care services this year, about 1 million more than just four years ago.

☑ **Historic New \$22 Billion Concurrent Receipt Benefit**

After more than a century of inaction the federal government, Congress approved a historic concurrent receipt benefit for veterans that will provide over \$22 billion to more than 250,000 disabled military retirees over the next ten years. Public Law 108-375: Effective January 2005, a retiree rated 100% service-connected will be authorized to receive full retirement benefits.

☑ **GI Bill Boosted Record 46% Since 2001**

As a result of legislation approved in 2001, the GI Bill educational benefit was boosted by 46%, raising the lifetime benefit for qualified veterans from \$23,400 to \$35,460.

☑ **VA Home Loan Maximums Will Increase by 67% Since 2001**

Public Law 108-454 increases the maximum VA home loan guarantee to \$333,700, an increase of 67% from the prevailing maximum level in 2001.

☑ **Dozens of Veterans Benefits and Services Expanded and Improved**

Over the past four years, Congress has passed, and President Bush signed, 17 separate bills to improve and expand veterans' benefits and services that will:

- . *Expand the scope and quality of veterans' health care services;*
- . *Provide new and increased benefits to disabled veterans;*
- . *Improve job training and placement services for veterans;*
- . *Clarify and strengthen employment and reemployment rights for veterans*
- . *Extend new benefits to veterans' widows and dependents;*
- . *Help eradicate homelessness among veterans;*
- . *Expand the national cemetery system for veterans; and*
- . *Strengthen the legal rights of all servicemembers.*