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# United States Senate

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December 12, 2018

The Honorable Robert Wilkie  
United States Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

Thank you for your December 10 response to my November 16 letter on student veterans receiving incorrect monthly housing allowances (MHAs). I appreciate your commitment that “each and every Post-9/11 GI Bill beneficiary will be made whole” and the efforts by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to reduce the average amount of time to resolve an MHA claim to 24 days. But after reviewing your response, I have additional questions:

1. You responded that the contractor hired to implement the MHA changes received “satisfactory” performance assessments. Given the reported failures, I find it difficult to believe that this assessment is accurate. Please provide copies of these assessments and an explanation of how the contractor’s performance was “satisfactory.” If the contractor’s performance was satisfactory, what, in your view, was the root cause of the delays in making the upgraded IT system operational?
2. Please provide a timeline for when the VA will issue additional payments to students who received incorrect MHA payments.
3. What is the source of funding for the VA’s revised strategy for implementing the Forever GI Bill? When does the VA expect to have cost estimates for this process?
4. Does the VA have contingency plans if its IT systems are still unable to process MHAs accurately by December 1, 2019?
5. Your response did not adequately address whether the VA plans to retire the legacy IT system that processes MHAs. Does the VA plan to retire this system, and, if so, how much will it cost to fully replace it?

Please provide your response in writing by Friday, December 21, 2018. I also request that the VA provide monthly briefings to my staff on its progress addressing this issue, with a particular focus on the new IT system upgrades.

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We have a responsibility to our veterans and taxpayers to ensure that government programs deliver on their promises. I know that you appreciate the seriousness of this issue, and thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter. If you have any questions about this request, please have your staff contact John Lin or Rick Berger on the Budget Committee staff at 202-224-0642.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael B. Enzi". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Michael B. Enzi  
Chairman  
Committee on the Budget