

## VA Announces Timeframe for Stimulus Payments to Veterans

Monday, March 23 2009

Stimulus package funds projects in Augusta, Caribou and South Paris

WASHINGTON, DC &ndash; Today, Congressman Mike Michaud, Chairman of the Veterans&rsquo; Affairs Subcommittee on Health, praised the announcement by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) that they plan to move forward with projects in Maine and initiate one-time stimulus payments to veterans. The projects and payments detailed below were authorized and funded by H.R. 1, the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

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&ldquo;The VA funding contained in the stimulus package for projects in Maine and throughout the nation will help begin to chip away at the VA&rsquo;s maintenance backlog,&rdquo; said Michaud. &ldquo;This funding will help to improve and expand facilities for our nation&rsquo;s bravest. The one-time extra payment is a small but important step in helping those that put their life on the line get through these tough economic times.&rdquo;

To be eligible for the \$250 payment, VA beneficiaries must have received compensation, pension, dependency and indemnity compensation, or spina bifida benefits at any time between November 2008 and January 2009. No application is necessary. VA will use its existing payment records to determine eligibility for the \$250 payment. Beneficiaries will receive their payments in the same way (either by direct deposit or mail) they receive their monthly VA benefits. VA will inform beneficiaries and the public when releasing the payments. The Internal Revenue Service cannot tax this payment. VA estimates \$700 million in payments will be made, with payments beginning in June 2009.

The law allows only one \$250 payment per individual. VA beneficiaries who also receive benefits from the Social Security Administration or Railroad Retirement Board will be paid through those agencies, and will therefore not receive the payment from VA.

In addition to the one-time payments, stimulus funding is being targeted to improve medical facilities and national cemeteries, provide grants to assist states in acquiring or constructing state nursing homes, and to remodel, modify or alter existing facilities to care for veterans. Funds will also be used to hire and train temporary claims processors, and to pursue needed information technology initiatives. Projects recently announced in Maine are below.

National Cemetery Administration Projects in Maine:

National Shrine Projects (headstones/markers and gravesites)

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Togus National Cemetery &ndash; \$732,000

Monument and Memorial Repair

-  
Togus National Cemetery, Soldiers & Sailors Monument (1 of 2), \$60,000

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Togus National Cemetery, Soldiers & Sailors Monument (2 of 2), \$50,000

FY 2009 Non-Recurring Maintenance for Togus VA Medical Center

-  
Construct private bathrooms and showers for inpatient wards in building 200, \$6,690,493

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Complete repairs and upgrades of building 200 and building 200E, \$400,000

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Construct a renewably fueled cogeneration system, \$6,170,000

Caribou and South Paris are slated to receive grants for VA Construction of State Extended Care Facilities

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