

## House Passes Three Bills to Help Veterans

Monday, March 30 2009

WASHINGTON, DC &ndash; Today, Congressman Mike Michaud, Chairman of the House Veterans&rsquo; Affairs Subcommittee on Health, lauded House passage of three bills to help veterans. H.R. 1377 would allow veterans to be reimbursed by the VA for emergency treatment they receive at non-VA facilities. H.R. 1171 reauthorizes the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014, and H.R. 1513 is a veterans' compensation cost-of-living adjustment. Michaud&rsquo;s committee marked up and prepared these bills for the House floor last week.

WASHINGTON, DC &ndash; Today, Congressman Mike Michaud, Chairman of the House Veterans&rsquo; Affairs Subcommittee on Health, lauded House passage of three bills to help veterans. H.R. 1377 would allow veterans to be reimbursed by the VA for emergency treatment they receive at non-VA facilities. H.R. 1171 reauthorizes the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014, and H.R. 1513 is a veterans' compensation cost-of-living adjustment. Michaud&rsquo;s committee marked up and prepared these bills for the House floor last week.

&ldquo;These benefits are critical for many Maine veterans and their families to help make ends meet,&rdquo; said Michaud. &ldquo;As veterans face challenges like higher energy and food prices, a cost of living increase is a modest, but welcome, step. I am also pleased that we are recommitting ourselves to addressing the issue of homelessness among our nation&rsquo;s veterans and addressing the need to take care of veterans who seek emergency treatment.&rdquo;

Additional details on the three bills the House passed can be found below.

H.R. 1377 &ndash; To expand veteran eligibility for reimbursement by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for emergency treatment furnished in a non-Department facility, and for other purposes

This bill would expand veteran eligibility to require the VA to pay for emergency treatment for a non-service connected condition if a third-party is not responsible for paying for the full cost of care. The bill clarifies that the VA pays the difference between the amounts paid by the third-party and the VA allowable amount, and is not responsible for copayments the veteran owes to the third party.

H.R. 1513 &ndash; Veterans&rsquo; Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009

This bill would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase the rates of basic compensation for disabled veterans and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation to their survivors and dependents, along with other benefits, in order to keep pace with the rising cost-of-living. The adjustment would become effective December 1, 2009, and would be equal to that provided on an annual basis to Social Security recipients.

H.R. 1171 &ndash; Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act of 2009

This bill would reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014. The bill was amended to authorize an additional \$10 million to provide dedicated services for homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children. Grants would be made available to provide job training, counseling, placement services, and child care services to expedite the reintegration of veterans into the labor force.

###

