

# RAHALL *Report*

## "The GI Bill"

by Congressman Nick Rahall

In a recent report from the Veterans Administration, it has been indicated that the Vietnam-era GI Bill has been used by well over 7.8 million veterans to further their educational training.

This participation points out the importance and need for the GI Bill, and furthermore magnifies the need for GI Bill educational benefits to continue. It is a program that I strongly support.

### MORE VETERANS HAVE USED VIETNAM-ERA GI BILL

More veterans have received educational training under the Vietnam-era GI bill than previous editions of the popular education assistance legislation, the Veterans' Administration has announced.

The latest statistics show that more than 7,895,000 veterans and service personnel have trained under the third GI bill, compared to 7,800,000 World War II veterans who received educational benefits under the original legislation.

The current GI bill figures include 1,397,000 peacetime post-Korean veterans and 679,000 individuals who trained only as service personnel. The remaining 5,819,000 are veterans of the Vietnam era (August 5, 1964-May 7, 1975), who took advantage of their education and training entitlement after separation from active duty.

The Vietnam-era GI bill participation rate, based on both the 5,819,000 Vietnam-era veterans and the 679,000 active duty trainees is approximately 66 percent and is expected to stay at or near that level over the remaining 7 years that are left in the current GI bill.

By contrast, the 7.8 million veterans who trained under the World War II GI bill represented just over 50 percent of the eligible veteran population. The participation rate under the Korean conflict GI bill was even lower at 43 percent.

To date, the VA has spent about \$53 billion to provide educational assistance to veterans and service personnel. From June 22, 1944, when the first measure was signed into law by President Roosevelt, through June 30, 1982, a total of 18.1 million have received assistance.

The bill, now in its 38th year, permits a veteran to use the educational benefits within 10 years following discharge from service, or by December 31, 1989, whichever is earlier.

Another educational assistance program, which requires financial participation by service personnel, is available to those who entered the military after December 31, 1976.

Veterans who want more information on GI bill eligibility should contact the nearest VA regional office.