

RAHALL *Report*

by Congressman Nick Rahall

AID TO VETERANS

We are all well aware of the need for government spending to be brought under control, but at the same time, the American people require and deserve certain public services. With this in mind, I am pleased that Congress has been able to put together a legislative package of benefit to our nation's veterans, while still meeting strict budget restraints.

Awaiting President Reagan's signature is the bill, S. 917, the Veterans Compensation Amendments of 1981. This measure will affect approximately 2.3 million disabled veterans and 324,000 surviving spouses and dependents, by granting an 11.2 percent average cost-of-living adjustment in compensation for service-connected disabilities.

This is a major step in providing necessary care for the more seriously disabled veterans--individuals who have already proven their courage and love for this country by their dedicated service.

Another measure awaiting final action is HR 3499, the Veterans Health Care, Training and Small Business Loan Act of 1981.

A provision of this bill will provide priority hospital and outpatient care for Vietnam veterans who believe their current medical conditions may be a result of exposure to Agent Orange or other defoliants used in Vietnam, as well as for other veterans who may have been exposed to ionizing radiation from nuclear testing following World War II.

HR 3499 also contains an important new initiative to benefit young veterans in the business world, as Vietnam-era veterans and certain service-connected disabled veterans will be eligible for loan guarantees and direct loan assistance for five years in order to acquire, expand or start a business. This is a program similar to the ones provided to veterans of previous wars and should give valuable aid in these economically hard times.

I am proud to have supported both of these pieces of legislation to benefit America's veterans, and I believe it proves that we can work within our means to provide the necessary services to those Americans who need assistance the most.

NJR - For you OK
me

DRAFT: RAHALL REPORT FOR 10/19

WE ALL ARE WELL AWARE OF THE NEED FOR GOVERNMENT SPENDING TO BE BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE REQUIRE AND DESERVE CERTAIN PUBLIC SERVICES. WITH THIS IN MIND, I AM PLEASED THAT CONGRESS HAS BEEN ABLE TO PUT TOGETHER A LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE ~~XXX~~ OF BENEFIT TO OUR NATION'S VETERANS, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ WHILE STILL MEETING STRICT BUDGET RESTRAINTS.

AWAITING PRESIDENT REAGAN'S SIGNATURE IS THE BILL, S. 917, THE VETERANS COMPENSATION AMENDMENTS OF 1981. THIS MEASURE WILL AFFECT APPROXIMATELY 2.3 MILLION DISABLED VETERANS AND 324,000 ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ SURVIVING SPOUSES AND DEPENDENTS, BY GRANTING AN 11.2 PERCENT AVERAGE COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT IN COMPENSATION FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

THIS IS A MAJOR STEP IN PROVIDING NECESSARY CARE FOR THE MORE SERIOUSLY DISABLED VETERANS, INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ALREADY PROVEN THEIR COURAGE AND LOVE FOR THIS COUNTRY BY THEIR SERVICE. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

ANOTHER ~~MAX~~ MEASURE AWAITING FINAL ACTION IS, HR 3499, THE VETERANS HEALTH CARE, TRAINING AND SMALL BUSINESS LOAN ACT OF 1981.

A PROVISION OF THIS BILL WILL PROVIDE PRIORITY HOSPITAL AND OUTPATIENT CARE FOR VIETNAM VETERANS WHO BELIEVE THEIR CURRENT MEDICAL CONDITIONS MAY BE A RESULT OF EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE OR OTHER DEFOLIANTS USED IN VIETNAM, AS WELL AS FOR OTHER VETERANS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO IONIZING RADIATION FROM NUCLEAR TESTING FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II.

HR 3499, ALSO REQUIRES THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A MINIMUM OF 90,000 HOSPITAL AND NURSING HOME BEDS ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ NATIONWIDE

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HR 3499 ALSO CONTAINS AN IMPORTANT NEW INITIATIVE TO BENEFIT YOUNG VETERANS IN THE BUSINESS WORLD, AS VIETNAM-ERA VETERANS AND CERTAIN SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR LOAN GURANTEES AND DIRECT LOAN ASSISTANCE FOR FIVE YEARS IN ORDER TO ACQUIRE, EXPAND OR START A BUSINESS. THIS IS A PROGRAM SIMILAR TO THE ~~OMEXXX~~ ONES PROVIDED TO VETERANS OF PREVIOUS WARS AND SHOULD PROVIDE VALUABLE AID IN ~~XXXXXX~~ ECONOMICALLY HARD TIMES.

I AM PROUD TO HAVE SUPPORTED BOTH OF THESE PIECES OF LEGIS-
LATION TO BENEFIT AMERICA'S VETERANS, AND ~~XXAMXRXRXRXRXRXRX~~
~~RXXRXRXRX~~ I BELIEVE IT PROVES THAT WE CAN WORK WITHIN OUR MEANS
TO ~~RXXRX~~ PROVIDE THE NECESSARY SERVICES TO THOSE AMERICANS WHO
NEED ASSISTANCE.