



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

Chairman Phil Roe, M.D.

H.R. 4830: The Servicemembers Improved Transition through Reforms for Ensuring Progress (SIT-REP) Act

Background:

In order for a student to receive benefits through the Post-9/11 GI Bill, they must file a claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to receive a certificate of eligibility (COE). The school they enroll in then uses this information to certify the student's enrollment with VA so that the school and the student can receive their proper payments. Unfortunately, there is typically a delay of 16.7 days for new claims and 6.8 for supplemental claims for VA to process the claim for GI Bill funding. These delays may result from slow VA processing or tardiness on behalf of the school. Due to these delays, there have been instances of a school placing a hold on a student's account or forcing the student to begin a payment plan until they receive money from VA. This can place an unfair and unnecessary debt and burden on the student veteran or eligible veteran.

The SIT-REP Act would require that in order to remain eligible for GI Bill benefits, a school must adopt a policy that prohibits the school from penalizing students for late payments from VA. Specifically, schools would no longer be allowed to impose a late fee, denial of access to facilities or other penalties on students whose GI Bill payments have not been received within 90 days of the beginning of the term.

The Message:

- Schools who don't receive a timely payment of GI Bill funds from VA may impose a penalty on the enrolled students.
- Students should not be penalized for a mistake made by VA or the school they're enrolled in.
- The SIT-REP Act would require schools to adopt a policy that prohibits the school from penalizing students for late payment from VA in order for the school to receive GI Bill funding.
- This bill would ensure veterans have access to the educational benefits they have earned.