



News From The ...

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Jeff Miller, Chairman, 335 Cannon House Office Building, Washington D.C. 20515

IMMEDIATE RELEASE July 11, 2011

CONTACT: Amy Mitchell (202) 225-3527

More Than One Year Later, Caregiver Support Finally Available

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the Subcommittee on Health held an oversight hearing entitled, “Implementation of Caregiver Assistance: Moving Forward,” to track the progress of the implementation of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) only recently brought online after months of delay. Due to Congressional pressure this spring, caregivers of America’s wounded warriors are finally receiving training and financial support to care for their loved ones.

“Time is of the essence for these families, many of whom have sacrificed their personal, professional, and financial security in order to take on full-time caregiving responsibilities for their veteran family member,” stated Rep. Ann Marie Buerkle, Subcommittee Chairwoman on Health. “We must ensure that the VA is meeting the intent of the law for our caregivers and that the support these wives and husbands, mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers deserve is not only respected, but recognized.”

The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 was signed into law in May 2010, but it was not until this May that caregivers could apply for benefits. Since the enrollment period opened, more than 1,000 caregivers have applied for support and 176 have received stipends.

“The VA needs to go further. If fully and properly implemented, the law will assure that Steven will be able to stay in his home with age-appropriate supports and his family will be able to continue to provide the care that he needs on a daily basis,” said Debbie Schulz, a former special education teacher and mother of Steven Schulz, a Marine severely wounded in Fallujah, Iraq, in 2005, who testified before the Committee.

The Subcommittee on Health will continue to monitor the implementation of the Caregivers program at VA, including ensuring eligibility requirements are fair and consistently applied, and that caregivers receive the appropriate benefits.

“We must get this right, not only for our wounded veterans, but for those who care for them. It is not only the veteran who is sacrificing today, but also their families,” said Buerkle.

For more news from House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, please visit:

<http://Veterans.House.Gov>

Find us on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/HouseVetsAffairs>

Follow us on Twitter at: [@HouseVetAffairs](https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs) and on YouTube at: [YouTube.com/HouseVetsAffairs](https://www.youtube.com/HouseVetsAffairs)

###