



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Chairman Phil Roe, M.D.

Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 Offset

Background:

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, named for the [principal architect](#) of the original GI Bill, would improve and extend GI Bill benefits granted to veterans, their surviving spouses and dependents. This bipartisan, bicameral package is budget neutral and includes provisions that have been proposed and prioritized by Veterans Service Organizations.

The improvements and changes to the GI Bill proposed in this legislation are fully paid for by making living stipend payments for veterans using the Post 9/11 GI Bill the same as Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) payments currently paid to servicemembers at the E-5 with dependents rate.

In 2014, the annual percentage increase to active duty BAH payments was reduced by 1% a year for five years, but GI bill living allowance payments were exempt. This bill expands GI Bill benefits by applying this same standard to GI Bill payments so that a GI Bill recipient receives the same living stipend per month as an E-5 active duty servicemember with dependents. The language of the bill specifically grandfathered in all current GI bill beneficiaries. Additionally, both VA and the Congressional Budget Office have indicated that current beneficiaries **would not be** affected by this change.

This bipartisan provision is broadly supported by Veterans Service Organizations, as it will pay for the much-needed improvements to the GI Bill included in this package.

For more information on The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, click [here](#).