

Quigley Introduces Bill to Support Veterans Seeking to Continue Education

Speeds up processing of GI Bill benefits, prohibits schools from denying vets access until account is paid in full by VA

WASHINGTON – Today, Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) introduced a new bill to prevent veterans from going into debt in order to pay tuition while waiting for their GI Bill education benefits to come through. H.R. 4279, the GI Bill Accelerated Tuition Payment Act of 2009, establishes an accelerated payment plan for eligible veterans receiving GI Bill benefits and stops educational institutions from denying veterans the opportunity to start classes prior to receiving full payment.

Today, many veterans who enroll in a business, technical or vocational school, community college, college or university are faced with the problem of paying for their tuition, fees and living stipends prior to the start of classes due to the processing time of the GI Bill educational benefits. A [recent *Military Times* article](#) reported that there are still 26,000 veterans now in college that are still waiting to receive their living stipends and book allowances under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

“The brave men and women of our military spend years on the front lines, directly in harm’s way but far from their loved ones,” said Congressman Quigley. “My legislation will ensure that no veteran must sacrifice any further, especially in an effort to continue his or her education.”

Under Quigley’s bill, upon receipt from the educational institution of a valid enrollment and established charges, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) would have 14 days in which to make payment. His legislation also forbids any educational institution from denying any eligible veteran from attending classes prior to the receipt of payment of GI Bill education benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, including tuition, fees, and other allowances. Additionally, the legislation provides each educational institution the right to hold the veteran’s grades or refuse to transfer credits until such time as any remaining debt is satisfied.

“The commitments made by our veterans represent the highest form of patriotism and service,

and we must do everything we can to provide them with support and recognition as they transition back to life at home,” added Quigley.

Quigley also recently introduced a resolution with the full support of the Illinois delegation to honor and welcome home the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the Illinois National Guard. The 3,000 brave soldiers of the 33rd IBCT represented the largest overseas deployment of Illinois guardsmen since World War II.

Quigley will be urging House Committees to consider H.R. 4279 as soon as possible.