

Washington, DC (December 30, 2012) – The Improving Transparency of Education Opportunities for Veterans Act (H.R. 4057) sponsored by Congressman Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Vice-Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, was sent today to President Obama for his signature. The legislation enhances the Post 9/11 GI Bill, ensuring veterans' educational benefits are used most efficiently and effectively.

"I would like to thank my colleagues in both the House and Senate, especially Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Richard Burr (R-NC), for their support of the Improving Transparency of Education Opportunities for Veterans Act," said Congressman Bilirakis.

"Congress' passage of H.R. 4057 marks an important step to ensuring our veterans have the information they need to best use the educational benefits they earned in service to our country.

"I hope President Obama swiftly signs this important piece of legislation into law, so our nation's heroes can maximize their educational opportunities and reintegrate into the civilian workforce with the skills and training they need to succeed."

H.R. 4057 includes several provisions championed by Bilirakis to improve the lives of our nation's heroes. The bill highlights available educational resources to help GI Bill beneficiaries choose the school best meeting their educational needs. It also limits the total amount of taxpayer dollars which can be paid to senior VA employees in bonuses.

The Dignified Burial of Veterans Act (S. 3202) with language introduced by Bilirakis in the House is also headed to President Obama's desk. The bill requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide caskets or urns for veterans with no next of kin and insufficient resources to cover burial and funeral expenses. The legislation comes after it was discovered that Pvt. Lawrence Davis Jr., a World War II veteran with no next of kin, was buried in a cardboard box at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Fla.

"America's veterans deserve to be laid to rest the same way they served this nation: with dignity and honor," Bilirakis said. "This legislation recognizes their service and ensures all veterans receive proper respect upon their passing."

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