DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Education Service
Washington, DC 20420

January 6, 2011

Dear Higher Education Executive:

On January 4, 2011, President Obama signed into law the "The Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010." The law makes some significant changes to the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

We have enclosed a summary of the changes. A comprehensive listing can be found on the GI Bill website: www.gibill.va.gov.

We are working diligently to develop the procedures necessary to implement the provisions of the new law.

It is important to note that your students requiring assistance need to do nothing different to have their inquiries resolved. The latest changes to any VA education program are posted immediately to the GI Bill website: www.gibill.va.gov. The "Ask a Question" feature on our web site provides full inquiry resolution in a secure electronic environment to individuals with questions. Calling the 1-888-GIBILL1 (1-888-442-4551) toll-free number will connect the caller to the Call Center.

With your continuing support, we are confident we can get these changes integrated into the current program quickly. As we move forward with implementation, we will continue to ensure the latest information is available immediately to you and your staff.

Best regards,

KEITH M. WILSON
Director

Enclosure: Summary "The Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010"

Summary of S. 3447 As Amended

Title I:

Effective now but not payable until October 1, 2011:

- Expands the Post-9/11 GI Bill to include certain Active Service performed by National Guard members who served under title 32 U.S.C. for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the National Guard; or under section 502(f) for the purpose of responding to a national emergency

Effective August 1, 2011:

- Simplifies the tuition and fee rates for those attending a public school and creates a national rate for those enrolled in a private or foreign school
  - No individual state caps
  - Private school costs are capped at $17,500 annually
  - The Yellow Ribbon Program still exists for costs above the cap

- Allows VA to pay kickers on a monthly basis instead of a lump sum at the beginning of the term and also pay kickers to those who are attending school at half-time or less

- Allows those who are eligible for both Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits and Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to choose the Post-9/11 GI Bill's monthly housing allowance instead of the Chapter 31 subsistence allowance

- Allows reimbursement for more than one "license and certification" test (previously only one test was allowed)

- Allows reimbursement of fees paid to take national exams used for admission to an institution of higher learning (e.g., SAT, ACT, GMAT, LSAT)

- Break or interval pay is no longer payable under any VA education benefit program unless under an Executive Order of the President or due to an emergency situation such as a natural disaster or strike.

Effective October 1, 2011:

- Allows students to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill for non-college degree programs such as: on-the-job training, flight (for other than a private pilot license) at flight schools, apprenticeship training, and correspondence courses

- Flight programs: Pays the lesser of actual net costs for in-state Tuition and Fees assessed by the school or $10,000, which ever is less *"per academic year."*

- Housing allowance is now payable to students (other than those on active duty) enrolled solely in distance learning, the housing allowance is ½ the national average BAH for an E-5 with dependents (the rate would be $673.50 for 2011)

- Prorates housing allowance to training time
  - A ¾ time student would receive ¾ housing allowance

- Allow students on active duty to receive a books and supplies stipend.

Title II:

- Reporting fees paid to schools increases from $7 to $12 per student per year.

- Programs offered at accredited public and private-not-for-profit schools are deemed already approved for VA Education Benefits

- Allows the VA to use SAAs for compliance and oversight duties

- Requires that reporting fees only be used for the purpose of certification

The latest updates will be posted on our website: www.gibill.va.gov.