

# CONGRESSMAN DAN LIPINSKI

## WORKING FOR VETERANS

Legislative Update Fall 2008



Dear Veteran,

I am writing this Veterans Day to thank you again for your dedicated service to our country, and inform you about what I have been working on in Washington to honor your sacrifices and those made by all of our veterans.

Today there are twenty-five million veterans and over 600,000 survivors receiving veterans' benefits. With hundreds of thousands of troops deployed overseas in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, the number of veterans will be rising and the need for services will be growing.

That is why I have prioritized delivering health care, education, and housing assistance to veterans. We can and must do more for our veterans, and I am honored to continue to work on behalf of all those who have served our nation so bravely.



Lipinski discusses the need for better benefits for area veterans.

On the battlefield, every troop pledges to leave no soldier behind. Although America's debt of gratitude to our veterans can never be fully repaid, Congress must ensure that we take this same pledge to not leave our veterans and their families behind.

In order to serve you, my experienced staff is here to assist with your veterans' issues and any other issues that you may have. **To seek assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 312-886-0481.**

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan".

Dan Lipinski

### Lipinski Receives an A+ for His Support of America's Veterans

In October, Congressman Lipinski received the perfect grade of A+ from the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) for his work in supporting America's veterans.

The legislative scorecard released by IAVA analyzes 13 votes in the House of Representatives during the 110th Congress that were deemed critical in taking a stand for and honoring Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

The complete IAVA scorecard can be viewed online at [www.veteransreportcard.org](http://www.veteransreportcard.org).

### Congressman Lipinski's office is available to assist with veterans' issues such as:

- Obtaining personnel and medical records
- Assisting with filling out veterans' claims
- Seeking military medals earned, but not received
- Learning about the Veterans History Project
- Gathering information about veterans' benefits
- Requesting a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol

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## Improving the Quality of Life for Veterans

### Providing Historic Aid for Education

The transition to civilian life can be challenging for the 1.7 million veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and others returning from harms way. Unfortunately, many new veterans are finding it increasingly difficult to afford a quality college education. Congressman Lipinski has worked to overhaul the 1984 Montgomery G.I. Bill, helping to increase education benefits for new veterans by getting the following law enacted:

- H.R. 2642, the Post 9-11 G.I. Bill, which will cover the cost of a college education at public universities, including \$1,000 per year for books and a monthly living stipend, and offers an opportunity to transfer these benefits to dependants.

### Keeping Veterans in their Homes

When our brave soldiers return home we must ensure they have access to affordable home loans and do not become the victims of foreclosure. Representative Lipinski has helped enact legislation to help meet the housing needs of our veterans, including:

- H.R. 3221, the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, which provides homeowner assistance to veterans by increasing VA home loan limits and bans the foreclosure of service member homes for nine months following a period of military service.

- S. 3023, the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2008, which extends access to home loans available to veterans, provides job protection, and also brings the claims processing system up to date for more accurate and timely delivery of benefits to veterans, families, and survivors.

### Increasing Compensation and Other Benefits

Our financial obligation to our veterans is a commitment that must be kept. In Congress, Representative Lipinski has made it a priority to increase benefits for all veterans, including helping enact into law:

- S. 2617, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2008, directing the VA to provide a COLA effective December 1, 2008 to the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities.
- H.R. 6081, the Heroes Earnings and Relief Tax Act of 2008, which provides \$1.2 billion in targeted tax relief to military personnel and their families.

### Boosting Access to Quality Health Care

Access to quality health care is essential to veterans of all ages. That is why Congressman Lipinski has fought to increase health care benefits, while also working to expand access and treatment options for veterans. This includes the passage into law of:

- H.R. 2764, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008, which provides for the largest increase in funding for veterans health care and benefits in the 77 year history of the VA, \$6.6 billion.
- H.R. 2638, the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2009, providing a \$4.5 billion budget increase to assist in mental health care, homeless assistance, VA care and facility modernization.
- S. 2162, the Veterans Mental Health Care and other Care Improvements Act of 2008, increasing access to mental health care for veterans and counseling services for their families.



Rep. Lipinski speaks to area veterans regarding increasing service benefits.



### Congressman Dan Lipinski

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Presorted Standard