

This time of year marks an occasion to remember the generosity and sacrifice of all of those who have valiantly served in the Armed Forces. On Veterans Day, we must take the time to honor and express our appreciation to those heroes that have and continue to defend the United States by securing our liberties and strengthening our democracy.

Throughout our nation's history, these brave men and women have nobly stood as the protectors of our most fundamental freedoms and the defenders of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They have defeated tyrants, liberated continents, and protected the American homeland. To demonstrate our deep gratitude, we must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our nations' veterans and their families by delivering on our responsibilities and promises.

Earlier this year, Congress passed and the President signed legislation which includes the most sweeping changes in benefits for American veterans under the GI Bill since World War II. This legislation modernizes the GI Bill to dramatically increase educational benefits to our veterans by providing significant financial assistance to pursue an approved program of study.

Payments for tuition and stipends range from 40% to 100% of total costs, based on the duration of service, and after 10 years of service an eligible servicemember will be able to transfer his or her benefits to immediate family members. The measure also provides a monthly stipend to cover living expenses and veterans are eligible for a stipend for books and other required educational expenses.

In addition, Congress has worked hard to care for those who have fought to defend our country by expanding funding for veterans benefits and services by over 50 percent in the past seven years to \$93.7 billion for 2009. This includes funding for veteran medical services, mental health and substance abuse, and assistance to homeless veterans. I am proud to have supported this legislation and will continue to use my voice and vote in Congress to support those that have selflessly defended our freedom.

This Veterans Day, we must send a message of gratefulness and support not only to our soldiers fighting in the Global War on Terror, but to America's over 23 million living veterans, and the millions who gave their lives for the rest of us to be free, prosperous, and safe. Let us remember the price they have paid to protect our great country and honor the sacrifice and the service of all our nation's heroes.

GARY G. MILLER
Member of Congress