

October 20, 2011

The Honorable John E. Boehner  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
H-232, the Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

I write to respectfully ask that the House of Representatives move swiftly to bring a veterans' Cost-of-Living (COLA) bill to the floor for a vote, in whatever legislative form is necessary to ensure immediate enactment. I know you share my concern that our nation's disabled veterans receive a cost-of-living increase equal to the 3.6 % increase just announced for Social Security as quickly as possible.

Legislation I introduced in April, H.R. 1407, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2011, puts veterans on equal footing with Social Security beneficiaries by increasing the amount provided for disabled veterans compensation, veterans' clothing allowance, and dependency and indemnity compensation for veterans' survivors by the amount of the Social Security cost of living adjustment (COLA). As you are aware, this critical bill passed the House of Representatives by voice vote on May 24, 2011. Last night, the United States Senate finally addressed this important issue by passing S. 894, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2011 by Unanimous Consent.

This non-controversial bill has received bipartisan support in both chambers. It has been scored by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) as having no budgetary impact, and is a crucial part of ensuring that benefits for our nation's disabled veterans and their families are sufficient to meet their needs.

As Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA), and the Member of Congress representing the district with the largest number of disabled veterans in New Jersey, I have heard from many veterans asking about the status of the COLA bill. Without Congressional passage of a final cost-of-living allowance legislation, veterans will not receive any COLA increase.

I know you share my commitment to ensuring that these veterans have these critical benefits. I look forward to working with you on behalf of our nation's veterans and appreciate your time and consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Jon Runyan  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial  
Affairs  
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs