

Passage of Veterans' COLA Bill

Washington, D.C. – The House of Representatives today passed S. 894, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2011. S. 894 passed the Senate on October 19, 2011. This measure will be sent to the White House, and the President is expected to sign it into law.

The cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), which takes effect on December 1, 2011, would increase the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors. These increases match the increases granted to Social Security recipients, which are expected to be 3.6 percent. This marks the first increase in two years.

“I am relieved that veterans will finally be seeing a cost-of-living increase,” stated Bob Filner (D-CA), Ranking Democratic Member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. “Veterans are in need of real help in this economy, and the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2011 will provide some measure of assistance to our veterans.”

The House passed its version of the COLA bill, H.R. 1407, on May 23, 2011. This version included a section extending the VA's authority to provide specially adapted housing assistance to individuals residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member. This authority was extended to December 2012 in P.L. 112-37, the Veterans Health Care Facilities Capital Improvement Act of 2011, enacted on October 5, 2011.