



National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission

1608 K Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006

K. Robert Lewis, Chairman - Connecticut

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05-09

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## Veterans Benefits in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

### Background

H.R. 1, signed into law on February 17, 2009 by President Barrack Obama as The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, contains several items that are of particular import to veterans. Although one of the portions of the Act addresses offshore veterans in the Philippines, there is also relief included for disabled veterans at home, as well as for others.

### Philippine Veterans:

Veterans of the Philippines from World War II will receive recognition for their service during that war, as well as lump sum payments to all living Filipino World War II veterans, those receiving benefits already, as well as those who are not currently in receipt of disability benefits. The payments authorized amount to one time payments of \$9,000 to each non-US citizen veteran of the Philippines, and \$15,000 to each veteran of the Philippines who is a U.S. citizen and residing in the United States. The stimulus package sets aside 198 million dollars for the veterans of the Philippines. Of the over 200,000 Filipinos who fought for the United States in World War II, fewer than 18,000 are alive today.

The provision calls for benefits to be available to such veterans during a one-year period from the date of enactment. Veterans are being told to file as soon as they are eligible. Applications must be submitted by Feb. 16, 2010, and are currently being processed through the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office located in Quezon City at Camp Aguinaldo. Veterans living in the United States should contact their local VA Regional Office.

**Disabled Veterans and those receiving Pension:**

Veterans in receipt of service-connected compensation or non service-connected pension, as well as survivors in receipt of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), will receive a one-time stimulus payment of \$250. The legislation orders the Secretary of the Treasury to disburse a \$250 payment to each individual who fulfills the conditions set aside, for any month during the 3-month period ending with the month which ends prior to the month that includes the date of the enactment of this Act. Therefore, veterans in receipt of compensation and pension benefits during any of the months of November or December 2008, and/or January of 2009 are eligible for this payment.

The criteria for eligibility are listed as follows:

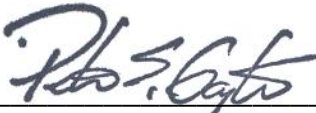
*(iii) VETERANS BENEFIT- A benefit payment described in this clause is a compensation or pension payment payable under—*

- (I) section 1110, 1117, 1121, 1131, 1141, or 1151 of title 38, United States Code;*
- (II) section 1310, 1312, 1313, 1315, 1316, or 1318 of title 38, United States Code;*
- (III) section 1513, 1521, 1533, 1536, 1537, 1541, 1542, or 1562 of title 38, United States Code; or*
- (IV) section 1805, 1815, or 1821 of title 38, United States Code,*  
*to a veteran, surviving spouse, child, or parent as described in paragraph (2), (3), (4)(A)(ii), or (5) of section 101, title 38, United States Code,*

The legislation also provides this benefit to citizens in receipt of certain Social Security benefits as well as those receiving benefits under the Railroad Retirement Benefit. Citizens are not entitled to receiving this benefit from multiple sources. If a veteran is also in receipt of one of these other benefits, the \$250 payment will only be issued once.

Plans call for an automatic matching system to be coordinated between the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Treasury Department to administer the funds. The specific regulation regarding this disbursement, yet to be written, will cover the details of the timeline by which veterans can expect to receive this payment, as well as recourse for veterans who believe they deserve this payment but have not been issued it.

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