

**May 1, 2009**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) -- U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) is announcing that beginning today, May 1, eligible veterans can begin applying online for improved education benefits under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill. This legislation, which Congressman Altmire co-sponsored, was signed into law last year.

Under this law, Pennsylvanians who have completed more than three months of active duty service since September 11, 2001 can now qualify for a maximum educational benefit of \$23,846 a year, which includes \$12,164 for tuition, \$1,000 for books and \$1,186 per month for living expenses. This is a dramatic increase over the original G.I. bill's maximum education benefit of \$9,990 a year.

**“This revamped G.I. bill honors the service of a new generation of American veterans by providing them with the resources they need to cover the cost of college today,” Altmire said. “I am proud that because of this new law, thousands of American heroes will now have the resources they need to further their education. I encourage all of our brave men and women who have served on active duty since 9/11 to apply for these benefits.”**

Applicants can apply through an online form at <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-1990-ARE.pdf>. Payments will be processed beginning August 1.

The Post-9/11 G.I. Bill provides veterans with a maximum education benefit equal to the cost of in-state tuition at the most expensive public university in their state and the cost of living for their area. For veterans who choose to attend a more expensive, private university, the bill also creates a program through which the government would match, dollar-for-dollar, any supplemental financial assistance given to veterans by their schools.

Veterans will have up to 15 years in which to use their educational assistance. This will ensure men and women serving multiple deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan do not run out of time to use the bill's benefits.