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CONTACT: Alexis Marks or Mara Lee
(202) 225-7163

May 1st Marks First Day to Apply for GI Bill for the 21st Century

Rep. Doris Matsui Shares Information About Legislation to Make Higher Education a Reality for Returning Veterans; Provides Resources for Sacramento Veterans

Washington, DC - Today Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA – 05) announced the beginning of applications for certificates of eligibility of benefits covered under the new GI Bill for the 21st Century that goes into effect on August 1st of this year. Last year, Congress enacted the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which restores the promise of a full 4-year college education from colleges and universities for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“The GI Bill for the 21st Century ensures veterans receive proper benefits due to them upon return from service and demonstrates our gratitude for our servicemen and women who put their lives on the line to defend America,” said Rep. Matsui, who supported the legislation in the House of Representatives. “It is our duty to ensure that Sacramento-area veterans have access to the best services and support possible, and to honor their service by providing access to quality and affordable higher education.”

The GI Bill for the 21st Century will help Sacramento veterans like Janelle Adams and Charles Caraway. Janelle Adams is a sophomore at Sacramento State, served in Iraq and Afghanistan from 2002 to 2007 and is a reservist on the weekends. She moved to Sacramento to go to Sac State in part because of their support for veterans, but as pre-med student, faces 5 years of tuition, and has to work in addition to her school and reservist work. The new GI Bill will “help me work less so that I can focus on school and my education won’t be limited,” said Adams.

Charles Caraway is a graduating senior this year, with hopes to attend McGeorge School of Law this fall. A Marine Corps veteran, as a recent graduate, he would need to push law school off or consider moving to go to a less expensive school because of the current financial situation. “But this legislation, which includes a yellow-ribbon program, will allow me and my wife to stay in the house we own in Elk Grove, go to a great law school, and fulfill my dream right here in Sacramento,” Caraway expressed. “This is an amazing piece of legislation and I’m glad to see Matsui help promote it for local veterans.”

Veterans who have served on or after September 11, 2001 may begin applying May 1, 2009, for certificates of eligibility for benefits. These benefits range in size with the maximum amount

reserved for those who have served on active duty for at least three years, and are generally payable up to 15 years after active duty. Tuition and fees for up to the maximum amount of in-state tuition, a monthly housing allowance at the location of the school, and an annual books and supplies stipend of up to \$1,000 may be awarded as a benefit of this new legislation.

For more information regarding the Post-9/11 GI Bill or to apply, please visit www.gibill.va.gov/.

CSU Sacramento will be holding informational workshops for both students and community veterans starting as early as next week, and continuing through the summer, to answer questions and guide veterans through the application process. For a full schedule or to sign-up, please call (916) 278-6733.