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111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 514

To amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance vocational rehabilitation benefits for veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 3, 2009

Mr. AKAKA introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance vocational rehabilitation benefits for veterans, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Rehabilitation and Training Improvements Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE FOR VETERANS PARTICIPATING IN A PROGRAM OF REHABILITATION.

(a) MODIFICATION OF AMOUNT OF SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE.—Subsection (b) of section 3108 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(b) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the amount of the subsistence allowance to be paid to a veteran under this chapter for a month during which the veteran participates in a rehabilitation program under this chapter shall be the amount equal to the national average of the amount of basic allowance for housing payable under section 403 of title 37 for that month for a member of the uniformed services in pay grade E–5 with or without dependents, as applicable.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 2009, and shall apply with respect to subsistence allowances payable under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, for months beginning on or after that date.

SEC. 3. REIMBURSEMENT FOR COSTS OF PARTICIPATION IN A PROGRAM OF REHABILITATION FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PROGRAM OF REHABILITATION.

Section 3108 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j)(1) The Secretary may, under such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe for purposes of this subsection, pay to each veteran who successfully completes participation in a rehabilitation program under this chapter an amount to reimburse the veteran for costs incurred by veteran as a direct consequence of participation in the program. The costs for which payment may be made under this subsection may include child care expenses, costs for clothing for interviews for employment, and such other costs as the Secretary may prescribe in such regulations. The amounts payable in reimbursement for any such costs shall be the amounts determined in accordance with such regulations.

''(2) Any payment of costs in reimbursement of a veteran under this subsection is in addition to the subsistence allowance payable to the veteran under this section.''.

SEC. 4. REPEAL OF LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF VETERANS ENROLLED IN PROGRAMS OF INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE.

Section 3120 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (e); and

(2) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (e).

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