

Mahoney Backs New Bipartisan GI Bill for the 21st Century

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Landmark Legislation Also Includes Full Funding for Troops

(June 20, 2008)

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"With this legislation, we moved beyond partisan politics to honor our veterans with not only our words, but our deeds. Congress renewed its commitment to those who have served our nation in uniform with a new 21st Century GI Bill that opens the doors of our colleges and universities to our veterans and their families," said Congressman Mahoney. "The new 21st Century GI Bill says to our troops and veterans, just as you have invested your service to protect our nation's future, we intend to invest in your future by making the dream of a college education a reality."

More than 168,244 Floridians have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan since 2001. Unfortunately, current benefits pay only about 70 percent of a public college education and 30 percent of a private college education for these veterans when they return home. The expanded GI Bill will restore full, four-year college scholarships to veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars to help them participate in our economic recovery, just as the veterans of World War II did.

"I voted to provide our troops with the resources they need to fight the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This was also a vote for fiscal responsibility and greater accountability. It is time to start making the Iraqis pay for their country's reconstruction and today's vote requires that the Iraqi Government match U.S. reconstruction aid dollar-for-dollar."

The legislation approved by the House today also includes \$161.8 billion that will support the cost of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan through the summer of 2009. It also requires that State Department and USAID reconstruction aid for Iraq be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Iraqi Government.

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