

AUGUST 6, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H. R. 7767 - Veterans Disability Compensation and Survivors Benefits Act of 1975 which provides cost-of-living increases in compensation, benefits for service-disabled veterans and their survivors, increases the clothing allowance paid to eligible disabled veterans, and makes certain other changes in the veterans' compensation laws.

H. R. 7767 will, effective August 1, 1975, provide cost-of-living benefit increases ranging from 10% to 12% for recipients of veterans' service-connected disability compensation and for survivors eligible under the dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) program.

The major provisions of H. R. 7767 are:

Veterans disability compensation -- Benefits are provided under this program to 2.2 million veterans who have service-connected disabilities, including 1.3 million World War II veterans and 425,500 Vietnam Era Veterans.

H. R. 7767 provides:

- a 10% increase in monthly compensation rates for veterans rated 50% disabled or less.
- a 12% increase for those rated 60% or more disabled and a 10% increase in the additional compensation provided these veterans for their dependents.
- a 12% increase in the statutory awards.
- a \$25 increase, from \$150 to \$175, in the annual clothing allowance provided to veterans who, because of service-connected disabilities, wear or use prosthetic or orthopedic appliance which tend to wear out or tear their clothing.

Dependency and indemnity compensation -- Under the Servicemen's and Veterans Survivor Benefits Act of 1965, DIC payments are authorized for widows, children, and certain parents of servicemen of veterans who die from service-connected causes. About 366,000 beneficiaries currently receive DIC payment.

(MORE)

H. R. 7767 provides:

- a 12% increase in the monthly DIC rates paid to widows and children.
- a 12% increase, from \$64 to \$72, in the monthly rate of additional DIC payable to widows in need of regular aid and attendance.

VA estimates that the fiscal year 1976 cost of H. R. 7767 -- covering 11 months -- will be \$449.4 million and that the annual cost in fiscal year 1977 and later years will be approximately \$490 million.

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