

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
November 17, 2005

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Military Construction  
and Veterans Affairs  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
140 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Military Construction  
and Veterans Affairs  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
123 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hutchison and Senator Feinstein:

I am writing to ask for your continued support for language in the Senate-passed Fiscal Year 2006 appropriations bill for Military Construction and Veterans Affairs that will provide disabled veterans with information they need and deserve.

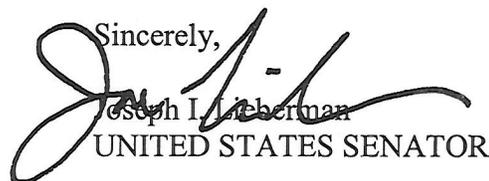
The purpose of the required information campaign is to inform all veterans in the low cluster states about the history of below average disability compensation payments in these states and provide them with instructions for submitting new claims and requesting reviews of past disability claims and ratings.

The Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs has documented the fact that disabled veterans in some states receive significantly lower average disability compensation payments than veterans in other states. The May 19, 2005 *Review of State Variances in VA Disability Compensation Payments* identified a "Low Cluster" of six states in which disabled veterans receive average disability compensation payments of \$7,300 or less – significantly below the national average of \$8,378. These states were Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, Connecticut, Michigan, and Indiana. This disparity in veterans' disability compensation across states has existed for decades. Thus some veterans may, by virtue of where they live, have been shortchanged for years. The first step in rectifying this situation is to inform veterans about the existence of this disturbing trend and to educate them about options for having claims reviewed or reconsidered.

This provision is supported by a number of groups including the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and the American Legion.

I urge you to retain in the final conference report the language which provides for this information campaign. I believe this provision will have an important impact on the veterans in our states.

Sincerely,



Joseph I. Lieberman  
UNITED STATES SENATOR