

## **VETERANS COMPENSATION EQUITY BILL** **S. 2825**

If you have a VA service connected rating of "0" percent this recently introduced Bill; S. 2825, may be of interest to you.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI), Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, introduced legislation to provide a minimum compensation level for veterans whose service-connected injuries require continuous medication or adaptive devices, such as hearing aids.

"Today, veterans who suffer a service-connected injury that requires continual medication or adaptive devices, like hearing aids, may not receive any disability compensation payments. It is important that all of these veterans be compensated in a fair and equitable manner. Veterans with similar disabilities should receive similar benefits," said Akaka.

The Veterans' Compensation Equity Act of 2008 would ensure a minimum 10 percent disability

rating for all veterans whose service-connected disability requires continuous treatment. The provision is in line with a recommendation made by leading veterans' service organizations in the Independent Budget.

Chairman Akaka's floor statement on the legislation is copied below:

Today I introduce the proposed "Veterans' Compensation Equity Act of 2008." This legislation would mandate fair and equitable ratings for veterans whose disabilities require continuous medication or the use of adaptive devices, such as hearing aids.

Specifically, the bill would require that all veterans who receive continuous medication or require use of one or more adaptive devices, such as hearing aids, prescribed by the Department of Veterans Affairs or other licensed health care provider for treatment of a service-connected disability, shall be rated at not less than ten percent.

The amount of compensation veterans with service-connected conditions receive is based on a disability rating, which VA assigns. VA uses its Rating schedule to determine which rating to assign to a veteran's particular condition. Currently the Rating Schedule provides a minimum compensable rating of ten percent or higher for most but not all disabilities that require continuous medication. I do not see any reason why one veteran who requires continuous medication for treatment of a service-connected disability, such as diabetes or asthma, should receive a compensable rating and another veteran who requires continuous medication for treatment of another disability, such as hypertension or chronic sinusitis, is assigned a zero percent rating and receives no compensation.

This legislation would also provide a minimum compensable rating when a hearing aid or other adaptive device, but is nonetheless assigned a noncompensable rating under the current Rating Schedule. The use of adaptive devices prescribed by a Department of Veterans Affairs or other licensed health care provider for

treatment of a service-connected condition would result in a rating of at least ten percent.

It is important that veterans who are disabled as a result of military service are compensated in a fair and equitable manner. Providing different compensation for different medical conditions that all require continuous medication or adaptive devices is not just.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this measure, so that veterans seeking compensation will be treated in a fair and equitable manner.

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Text of bill - -

Veterans' Compensation Equity Act of 2008  
(Introduced by Senate)

S 2825 IS

110<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

2d Session

S. 2825

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide a minimum disability rating for veterans receiving medical treatment for a service-connected disability.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

April 7, 2008

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

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide a minimum disability rating for veterans receiving medical treatment for a service-connected disability.

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the 'Veterans' Compensation Equity Act of 2008.'

SEC. 2. MINIMUM DISABILITY RATING FOR VETERAS RECEIVING CERTAIN MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY.

Section 1155 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the third sentence the following new sentence: 'For each veteran requiring continuous medication or the use of one or more adaptive devices, such as a hearing aid, prescribed by the Department or other licenses health care provider for treatment of a service-connected disability, the Secretary shall assign a disability rating for such disability of not less than 10 percent.'

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**For additional information please feel free to contact your local County Veterans' Service Officer.**

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**For Oconto County Veterans' Service Office please feel free to call (920) 834-6817 or e-mail: [cvso@co.oconto.wi.us](mailto:cvso@co.oconto.wi.us)**

**Veterans' – Thank you for your service.**