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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:**Megan Taylor |
| October 5, 2018 | 202-224-6244 |

**Heller Calls for Immediate Action to Ensure Protection of Housing Allowances for Student Veterans**

*Following Reports from Nevada’s Veterans, Heller Learns VA is Failing to Provide Monthly Housing Stipends for Some Nevada Student Veterans*

**WASHINGTON** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) has today called for additional information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) following reports from Nevada’s student veterans and higher education institutions that a number of monthly stipends provided by the VA to assist veterans with housing costs have not been provided.

“*As you may know, some student veterans utilizing the G.I. Bill in Nevada reported that they have not received their monthly housing allowance from the VA. I wanted to bring this issue to your attention as it is impacting universities in Nevada, including the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and other parts of the country, indicating it could be a systemic problem,”* ***Heller wrote.*** *“It is my understanding that the VA is implementing IT upgrades that the VA expected to have a small impact on the accuracy of G.I. Bill benefit payments, but that veterans would still receive a housing stipend.  However, it is concerning to hear that some veterans have not received any payment, putting their housing in jeopardy.  We cannot allow these veterans to become homeless as a result of this error.”*

Under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, veterans are ensured stipends so as to safeguard their ability to access housing while attending school using their earned benefits. Due to the immediacy of this issue and to prevent veterans from defaulting on rental or housing payments, Heller is demanding that the VA develop a plan to address these concerns no later than October 9th. In addition to requesting a course of action, Heller is asking that the VA deliver direct paths of communication for veterans who have not received their housing stipend, as well as immediate relief and further information to better understand the scope of this possibly technological issue.

**The full text of the letter can be found** [**HERE**](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/d9908965-aebf-4abe-b5ca-ee9d32e0b41a/10052018%20Letter%20to%20VA%20Secretary%20Wilkie%20regarding%20student%20veteran%20housing%20allowances.pdf) **or below.**

*Dear Secretary Wilkie:*

*It has come to my attention that student veterans in my home state of Nevada have not received their monthly allowance for housing that is afforded to them under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill.  As a senior member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, I want to ensure this issue is immediately resolved so that our student veterans are not faced with homelessness as a result of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) failing to provide that monthly stipend.*

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* *Please inform my office, as well as the rest of the members of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, the cause of this issue, the VA’s plan to address it, and the timeline for a resolution.*

* *How do you plan to communicate and conduct outreach on this issue with schools and student veterans in the interim?*

* *How can student veterans receive immediate relief from the VA for their missing housing stipends?*

* *Can you establish a dedicated phone number for veterans to call if they have not received their housing stipend?*

* *Have you begun to assess how widespread this issue is and how many veterans are currently impacted?*

*Again, I appreciate your immediate attention to this urgent issue impacting our student veterans in Nevada and across the nation. Given the urgency of this issue, I request a response no later than October 9, 2018.  Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff if we can assist in resolving this issue for our veterans.*

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