WASHINGTON, D.C. - Beginning February 1, more than a million eligible veterans will see their mileage reimbursement more than double for travel to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities.

"We have so many veterans who live in rural communities who have to drive long distances to receive medical care," said Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel). "This increase will help our veterans offset rising gas costs, a major burden for many of them."

The funds were included in the 2008 appropriations bill and were supported by Rep. Farr, who sits on the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee that passed the increase. The reimbursement rate increases from 11 cents per mile to 28.5 cents per mile.

VA also increased the deductible amounts applied to certain mileage reimbursements. The new deductibles are $7.77 for a one way trip and $15.54 for a round trip, with a maximum of $46.62 per calendar month. However, these deductibles can be waived if they cause a financial hardship to the veteran.

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