



For Immediate Release
February 29, 2012

Iraq Vets Reap Ohio Veterans Bonus

COLUMBUS – Although America’s war in Iraq is over, veterans of that conflict remain eligible for the Ohio Veterans Bonus, a monetary award that has paid more than \$24.5 million to over 19,000 Iraq veterans so far.

“We’re ever mindful that we still have many of our Ohio soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines in harm’s way in Afghanistan and other areas, serving in both our active and our Guard and Reserve forces,” Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe said. “But now that our war in Iraq is over, we want to be doubly sure that all the Ohioans who served there take advantage of the bonus they’ve earned, that’s been granted to them by the people of this state.”

Since August 2010, the Ohio Veterans Bonus has paid nearly \$45.3 million to 54,232 Ohio resident service members and veterans, of all qualifying time periods, and eligible families. Veterans of the periods of the Persian Gulf War and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are eligible, as well as the next of kin of those killed in action. The bonus is not subject to federal or state taxes, and can be used for any purpose.

Iraq veterans comprise the largest single group to receive bonus dollars, more than double the number of Afghanistan veterans who have collected. The total number of service members, veterans and surviving family members who received bonus payments is shown below by place of service and the amounts collected:

Active Service/Veterans & Surviving Family (note: those with service in more than one area are listed under the first area claimed)		
Place of Service	Total Recipients	Amount
Afghanistan	7,342	\$9,292,358.00
Iraq	19,312	\$23,583,762.84
Persian Gulf	7,993	\$4,277,585.50

Anywhere Else in the World	19,585	\$8,124,163.70
TOTALS	54,232	\$45,277,870.04

“We encourage everybody who’s eligible, veterans, those still serving in the active military, or families, to apply for this bonus,” Director Moe said. “Particularly, we ask our veterans of all eras here in Ohio to be proactive in spreading the word to the veterans of this era, so that nobody is left behind.”

The bonus is available to veterans who served more than 90 days active duty, not for training, during the periods of the Persian Gulf War and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. For the Persian Gulf, the period is from August 2, 1990 through March 3, 1991; for Afghanistan, from October 7, 2001 through a date to be determined by the President, and for Iraq, from March 19, 2003 and also through a to-be-determined date. Payment can be received for active duty service anywhere in the world during these periods, but is higher for veterans who served in the Persian Gulf or in Afghanistan or Iraq. Eligible veterans must have been Ohio residents at the time of their entry into the service, and must be Ohio residents currently.

The bonus pays \$100 a month to veterans who served in the Persian Gulf theater, or in the countries of Afghanistan or Iraq, up to a maximum of \$1,000. For veterans who served elsewhere, the payment is \$50 a month up to a \$500 maximum. Veterans medically discharged due to injuries sustained in combat can receive \$1,000, plus up to \$500 for months of service elsewhere. Family members of those killed in action or who died from disease as a result of their in-theater service can receive a bonus of \$5,000 plus whatever the service member was eligible for, up to a total of \$6,500. The Ohio Veterans Bonus is not taxed by either the federal government or the state.

Veterans needing more information or who want to apply can call toll-free to 1-877-OHIO VET (1-877-644-6838) option 2, visit www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov, or visit any county veterans service office (see www.dvs.ohio.gov for an interactive map of the county offices). The department also provides information about the bonus through its social media.

The Ohio Veterans Bonus continues a tradition of bonuses to reward Ohio veterans that dates back to the Civil War; however, these other war bonuses are now closed. Ohio voters overwhelmingly approved the current bonus, which is funded by the sale of bonds, in November 2009. The program was formally launched in August 2010.