



# **Veterans-For-Change Newsletter**

## *A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, April 09, 2017

Volume 8, Issue 15

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### **This-N-That**

Almost every day when I begin to read all the news alerts I get, I always dread coming across another article or DoD alert on the death of another Veteran.

This time, it was a Veteran from here in Pasadena, California!

Graham Gentles was working as a cashier at a Pasadena Target when he was subjected to the “walk of shame,” a disciplinary practice involving employees being paraded around the store in handcuffs, placed in a police car and taken into custody!

And although the reason this happened is still unclear, the police did find no reason to file charges and Graham was released, but he was also terminated from Target, and within a few days he took his own life.

You would think by now the civilian population would have heard, read or seen a new piece on PTSD, and Veterans taking their own lives as a solution to a problem they feel can't be fixed.

But you would also think a business, or store manager would use discretion in dealing with any problem within the confines of a business, but it seems the department stores take great pride in displaying their issues and problems publicly.

This in my opinion, should the person be innocent would open the door for a massive lawsuit and in this case Mrs. Gentles will be doing so and I truly hope she wins one hell of a massive settlement.

I know this won't bring back Graham nor will it be any form of relief or closure, but it would be sending a very loud message to businesses.

Medical Care and Benefits for 90,000 Navy Veterans on the line in D.C., and they need YOUR help.

Further down in this newsletter there is a "Take Action" for the bill that would finally provide the needed, earned and just benefits, so please on all the take action notices, click on the links and send out your E-Mails to your reps in DC asking for their support.

In a historic move, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary David Shulkin has embraced strong legislation that would allow him to immediately terminate employees at-will.

There was a bill in the previous administration that would have done this very thing however former President Obama vetoed the bill declaring it unfair practice, yet almost every civilian business in the country hires employees "at will" meaning they can be terminated at any time with or without cause.

This bill would resolve the problem of terminations and most especially those who are lazy, steal drugs, ignore Veteran patients when in distress, etc.

This would be something you could pick up the phone and call your reps and ask their full support of this bill!

And again we'd like to ask that you either forward this newsletter to friends and family or copy and paste the action items into a E-Mail and ask all of them to please help by sending off the prewritten E-Mails as well, and maybe if they would also do the same and forward to their address book as well.

This is how we make things go viral, and get many others to help in the fight for better care, better and more benefits for ALL Veterans!

On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

[Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org)



**Help Blue Water Vietnam Vets Exposed to  
Agent Orange**

The “Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act” has been introduced in both the House and Senate (H.R. 299 & S. 422 respectively). These proposals would clarify that service members serving off the coast of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam conflict have a presumption for filing disability claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for ailments associated with exposure to the Agent Orange herbicide. FRA believes Congress should recognize that so-called “Blue water” veterans were exposed to Agent Orange herbicide and authorize presumptive status for VA disability claims associated with this exposure.

Please use the [Action Center](#) to ask your legislators to support this important legislation.

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## **VA Modernizes Claims Process**

Early this year, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) began extracting hundreds of thousands of inactive-claim records from regional offices east of the Mississippi for digital conversion. Inactive-claim records are claim files that have been settled and have remained inactive for a number of years. The initiative will help reduce processing time for thousands of new claims associated with inactive records. More work still needs to be done. VBA currently houses an estimated 2 million claims-related documents in 34 locations across the country and is currently extracting over 170,000 claim records for digital conversion from the [St. Petersburg regional office](#).

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## **TREA Goes to the Supreme Court**

Last week, in an extremely rare occurrence, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) heard an argument involving a military divorce and, more specifically, the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act (USFSPA). The issue in *Howell v. Howell* was whether the USFSPA pre-empts a state court's order directing a military retiree to pay his former spouse for a reduction in the former spouse's portion

of his military retirement pay, when that reduction resulted from the Veteran's post-divorce waiver of retirement pay in order to receive compensation for a service-connected disability.

TREA: The Enlisted Association was represented at the Supreme Court by Deputy Legislative Director Mike Saunders.

Here are the facts of the case: in 2005, 14 years after John, a military retiree, and Sandra Howell divorced. The former spouses agreed that Sandra would receive half of John's military retirement pay when it began the following year. John later opted to waive part of his retirement pay to receive disability benefits (which are not taxable, unlike retirement pay) instead. That decision meant that Sandra received \$125 less per month than she had previously received, while John actually got more money - both the additional money that would otherwise have gone to Sandra and the savings from his disability benefits being tax-free. Sandra went to court, asking to have her monthly payments restored to the amount that she had received before John's waiver and a reimbursement for the amount she believed was owed for the lower payments in the past. The Arizona Supreme Court agreed with her, and the Supreme Court agreed last fall to weigh in.

The USFSPA is a 1982 federal law that authorizes state courts to divide military retirement pay in a divorce according to state law. Retirement pay under this law is considered "disposable retired pay" and is defined as the service member's retired pay, minus any portion of that pay waived in favor of disability benefits.

At oral argument John Howell's attorney said that the USFSPA bars state courts from ordering him to pay Sandra half of the portion of his retirement pay that he now receives as disability pay. This position is not only consistent with the text of the USFSPA, he contended, but also makes sense in light of the purpose of the law. Congress would have wanted Veterans to keep their disability pay, he emphasized, because they are the ones who are disabled, and because the disability pay is intended to substitute for money that the Veteran is no longer able to earn. That goal of protecting a Veteran's disability, he continued, is not related to whether the Veteran becomes entitled to

disability pay before or after the divorce.

Some of the Justices seemed to believe that, despite John Howell's attorney's claims, the timing of the disability benefits does matter. Justices Sotomayor and Ginsburg suggested that when a couple gets a divorce after one spouse has opted to receive disability benefits, the decision is made with a full picture of their finances. Servicemembers who unilaterally decide to reduce their ex-spouses monthly payments by electing to receive disability compensation instead of retired pay (after the divorce) should subject themselves to the re-opening of divorce agreements to account for the changed circumstances, in the words of Justice Ginsburg.

It is never a good idea to try and guess the outcome of a case that reaches the Supreme Court by listening to oral arguments, but there is a good possibility that the decision in this case will affect the divorce settlements of military retirees in the near future.

TREA: The Enlisted Association will keep you informed of any developments.

Source: TREA

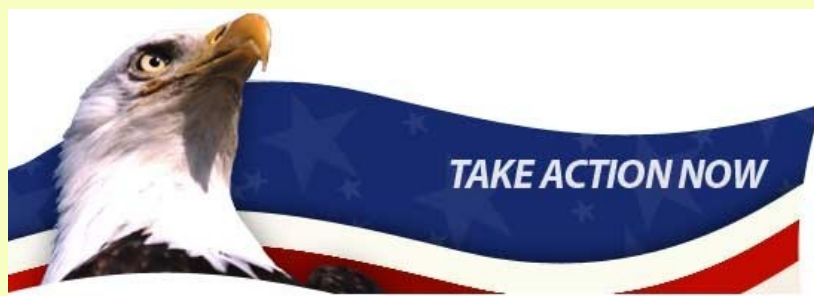


**The Little-Known Veterans Pension Benefit**

Thousands of veterans and their spouses could be missing out on thousands of dollars in veterans benefits that could help them afford the costs of senior care, such as assisted living, in-home care or nursing homes.

[VeteranAid.org](http://VeteranAid.org) is the leading free resource that offers detailed information on a veterans' pension benefit called Aid and Attendance (A&A). If veterans require assisted living care in a community or at home, we give them the information they need to apply for the A&A benefit themselves. We know that finding senior care for yourself or your loved one can be a difficult and stressful time. We strive to make all of the information one would need to apply for and receive the Aid and Attendance benefit successfully readily available on our site.

Our newest tool, the [eligibility calculator](#) is a short 1-minute questionnaire that lets a person know if they may be eligible for the A&A benefit. In addition to our information on Aid and Attendance eligibility, we also have instructions on [how to apply for the benefit](#), an [FAQ page](#), a [blog](#), and [forums](#) where people can read others' questions, advice, and success stories when applying for the benefit and join the forums to ask their own questions.



**Support SBP/DIC Offset Repeal Legislation**

Senator Nelson (FL) has introduced legislation (S. 339) and Congressman Joe Wilson (SC) has introduced identical legislation in the house (HR 846) that repeals the SBP/DIC offset for survivors, sometimes referred to as the "Military Widows Tax.". Please use this action center contact your legislators to ask them to support this important legislation.

[Take Action!](#)

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## **American Legion Testifies on VA Staff Shortages**

American Legion National Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation Division Director Louis Celli recently spoke about the dangers of staff shortages among physician and medical specialists within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) during a hearing hosted by the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health. The hearing focused on 'Healthy Hiring: Enabling VA to Recruit and Retain Quality Providers.' A link to the webcast of the hearing as well as witness statements are available on the [U.S. House Committee on Veterans Affairs website](#).

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## **COLA Bill Introduced in House**



On March 2, 2017, the Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Disability and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, Congressman Mike Bost (IL) and Ranking Member Elizabeth Esty (CT) introduced H.R. 1329, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2017.

This bill, if enacted, would provide an increase, effective December 1, 2017, in the rates of compensation for Veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) for the survivors of certain disabled Veterans.

Disabled Veterans' disability compensation has not kept pace with the rest of the economy; even in years when there were COLA payments, disability benefits lagged. Many disabled Veterans and their survivors are on fixed incomes and rely on COLAs to keep pace with their current living expenses. In accordance with DAV Resolution No. 013, DAV strongly supports H.R. 1329.

Please use the prepared electronic letter or draft your own to urge your member in the House to cosponsor H.R. 1329.

As always, we appreciate your support for DAV and your grassroots participation in the Commander's Action Network. Your advocacy helps make DAV a highly influential and persuasive organization in Washington.

Thank you for all you do for America's Veterans and their families.

Click [HERE](#) and send your message!

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## **To Contact your Members of Congress**

To Call your Representative: 202-225-2305

To call your Senator: 202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call different members of Congress: 202-224-3121

Toll FREE Number: 866-272-6622



## **S. 681, the Deborah Sampson Act to Improve VA Services for Women Veterans**

On March 21, the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, Senator Jon Tester, introduced S. 681, the Deborah Sampson Act. This comprehensive measure addresses gender disparities and would improve and expand programs and services for women veterans provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

The bill would establish a pilot program for peer-to-peer counseling and authorizes group retreat counseling for women veterans recently separated from military service. It would expand the capabilities within the VA Women Veterans Call Center and extend the number of days, from seven to 14, VA can cover the cost of care for newborns of women veterans and authorize medically-necessary transportation for newborns.

The legislation aims to eliminate barriers to care by ensuring every VA medical facility has at least one full-time or part-time women's health provider, as well as a Women Veterans Program Manager and a Women Veteran Program Ombudsman. Additional resources are authorized for mini-residency training in women's health for clinicians, and retrofitting VA facilities to enhance privacy, safety and improve the overall environment of care for women veterans.

S. 681 would provide support services for women veterans seeking legal assistance and authorizes additional grants for organizations supporting women veterans and their families. Finally, The Deborah Sampson Act would require data collection and reporting on all VA programs serving veterans, by gender and minority status, including a report on the availability of prosthetics for women veterans and would better coordinate outreach by centralizing all information for women veterans in one easily accessible place on VA's website.

DAV's 2014 report, Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home identified many of these gaps in VA programs for women and has long advocated for a more comprehensive provision of VA women's health services that appropriately recognizes and honors their service and sacrifice.

Please contact your elected representatives to urge co-sponsorship and passage of S. 681. A letter has been prepared for this purpose or you may write your own to express your personal views. Click the link below to log in and send your message:

As always, thank you for your support.

Click [HERE](#) and send your message!

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**Health Care for Women Veterans**

Did you know the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has designated women's health primary care providers at every medical center? VA is evolving to fit the unique needs of women Veterans. Women Veterans may be eligible to receive comprehensive primary care, specialty care, mental health care, emergency care, and women's health specialty care. Specialty care services include gynecology care, breast cancer screening and advanced breast care, fertility treatments, maternity care, and newborn care for seven days. For more information and to apply, visit the [VA website](#).

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## Legislation Would Make VA 100% Smoke-Free

According to VA, only 20 percent of Veterans enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) are smokers. Many non-smoking Veteran patients are at an increased risk for cardiovascular events associated with exposure to secondhand smoke. The VHA currently provides 971 outdoor designated smoking areas and 15 indoor designated smoking areas, as required by the [Veterans Health Care Act of 1992](#). In contrast, smoking is prohibited in non-VA federal facilities, indoor military facilities and in most private-sector national healthcare systems.

Last week House Veterans' Affairs Health Subcommittee Chairman Brad Wenstrup (R-Ohio) introduced legislation ([H.R. 1662](#)) to prohibit smoking in any Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facility. Under this legislation, smoking would be banned inside VHA facilities immediately and outside VHA facilities within five years.

"Exposure to secondhand smoke puts Veteran patients at unnecessary risk. This common sense reform mitigates that risk by requiring VHA facilities to become 100% smoke-free within five years," said Wenstrup, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Health. "As a doctor and Veteran myself, ensuring that those who I have served alongside receive the best possible care is personal to me. But I believe it should be personal to every American. The least we can do for those who

fought for us is ensure they receive the same considerations and treatments at the VA, as they would in the private-sector."

The VA provides a variety of [smoking cessation resources](#) for Veterans looking to quit smoking, including medications, counseling, and online support on VA's website and mobile apps. The department also offers free over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy medications to its employees. Additionally, The National Cancer Institute has a Veteran-centric smoking cessation website, "[SmokefreeVET](#)," which provides resources on reasons to quit, how to quit, and quitting smokeless tobacco. For immediate assistance, Veterans are encouraged to call the VA's smoking "quit line" for support from a smoking cessation counselor at: 1-855-784-8838 (1-800-QUIT-VET).

Source: TREA

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## Help for Student Veterans

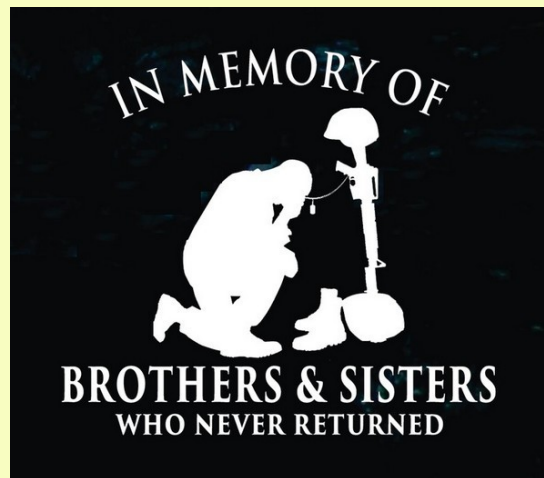
The U.S. Department of Education announced its decision to withdraw the American Council of Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) recognition as a federally recognized agency in December 2016. A complete [list of schools accredited by ACICS is available online](#). Recent legislation allows the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue paying GI Bill benefits for up to 18 months following the withdrawal of recognition of an accrediting agency while the school seeks alternate accreditation or program approval. The American Legion has service officers in every state who can provide answers to questions about education benefits, federal student loans and credit transferability. Find a service officer near you on the [American Legion website](#).

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## VA Fixes Veterans Crisis Line

In response to the recently released Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) report that reviewed the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) (VCL), VA released the following statement: "The Department of Veterans Affairs is proud to announce that the challenges with the Veterans Crisis Line have been resolved.... Our current call rollover rate is less than 1 percent, with over 99 percent of all calls being answered by the VCL." If you are in crisis, or know someone who is, call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline number, 800-273-TALK (8255). Veterans should choose option 1. Or, text 838255, or chat online at Veterans Crisis Line [website](#).

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**Ensure All Veterans are Provided Timely  
Access to Care**

The House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) has approved the “Eliminating the Sunset Date of the Choice Act” (H.R. 369), legislation that eliminates the sunset (expiration date) on the VA Choice law. The bill now goes to the House floor for further consideration.

FRA supports this act because the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) first priority must be to ensure that all Veterans currently waiting for treatment are provided timely access. This law gives Veterans who have waited more than 30 days for an appointment—or who live more than 40 miles from a VA medical facility—the choice to seek VA-funded care outside of the VA system.

Please use the [Action Center](#) to ask your U.S. Representative to support continuing the VA Choice program.

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## **VA and DoD Team Up on PTSD Research**

A new partnership between Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical researchers recently published its first joint publication, which examines post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms in veteran and active duty populations. The study will be published in the [Journal of Psychiatric Research](#), June 2017. The new study, the first to compare PTSD symptom trajectories of current and former service members, was authored by researchers from the VA and the DoD's Millennium Cohort Study (MCS). In the joint study, DoD and VA researchers found similar PTSD symptom trajectories in active duty personnel and veterans, suggesting consistency in how both groups experience PTSD over time. Learn more about the [Millennium Cohort Study](#).

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## **U.S. Government Accountability Office Reports**



- 1) Airport Funding: FAA's and Industry's Cost Estimates for Airport Development.
- 2) Aviation Certification: FAA Has Made Continued Progress in Improving Its Processes for U.S. Aviation Products.
- 3) Building Partner Capacity: Inventory of Department of Defense Security Cooperation and Department of State Security Assistance Efforts.
- 4) Commercial Space Launch Insurance: Weakness in FAA's Insurance Calculation May Expose the Federal Government to Excess Risk.
- 5) Defense Commissaries: DOD Needs to Improve Business Processes to Ensure Patron Benefits and Achieve Operational Efficiencies.
- 6) Drug Compounding: Survey of State Pharmacy Regulatory Bodies (GAO-17-363SP, March 2017), an E-supplement to GAO-17-64.
- 7) Drug Compounding: Survey of State Pharmacy Regulatory Bodies (GAO-17-363SP, March 2017), an E-supplement to GAO-17-64.
- 8) Drug Compounding: Survey of State Pharmacy Regulatory Bodies (GAO-17-363SP, March 2017), an E-supplement to GAO-17-64.
- 9) Highlights of a Forum: Data Analytics to Address Fraud and Improper Payments.
- 10) Immigration Status Verification for Benefits: Actions Needed to Improve Effectiveness and Oversight.
- 11) KC-46 Tanker Modernization: Delivery of First Fully Capable Aircraft Has Been Delayed over One Year and Additional Delays Are Possible.
- 12) Marine Corps Asia Pacific Realignment: DOD Should Resolve Capability Deficiencies and Infrastructure Risks and Revise Cost Estimates.
- 13) VA Disability Benefits: Additional Planning Would Enhance Efforts to Improve the Timeliness of Appeals Decisions.
- 14) Veterans Crisis Line: Further Efforts Needed to Improve Service.

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## **Paycheck Chronicles: Benefits for Unemployed Retired Military**

Approximately 40,000 active duty service members retire each year, and a good number of them are looking for jobs, but haven't found work. If you have that status, you may be eligible for a special type of unemployment benefits, called UCX (Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Military), based upon the amount of your military retirement pay and the limits in the state in which you are filing. For more details, see this [Paycheck Chronicles post](#).

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## **Veteran Crisis Resources**

**Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**

**Military Crisis Line 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**National Call Center for Homeless Veterans**

**1-877-4AID-VET (424.3838)**

**VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274**

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## **Commissary Update: Sales Numbers in Decline**

Sales and transaction data gathered by the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) through the first five months of fiscal 2017 show a familiar pattern of worrisome declines, traceable only in part to the recent force drawdown. The steady fall in commissary sales and store transactions since 2012 suggest Congress and Defense Department officials picked a risky time to try to lower taxpayer support of the benefit while still preserving shopper savings. Read the full [article](#).

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## Dentists Warn New Tricare Rates Will Cause Drop in Providers

Dentists in several states are warning reimbursement rates in the new Tricare dental contract are so low that many providers will be forced to stop participating in the plans and pass on higher out-of-pocket costs to military families. The [\\$2.9 billion Tricare Dental Plan \(TDP\)](#) contract for the families of active-duty, Guard and reserve troops is set to move from MetLife to United Concordia on May 1. About 1.8 million beneficiaries are enrolled in the program. Military retirees are not impacted by the new contract. For more details, see this [article](#).

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### ***Veterans-For-Change Web Site***

The Veterans-For-Change website has been under construction since day one back in 2009 and every day since then. The looks pretty much stay the same, but in the background constant improvement and change is being done to make our website the most user friendly “One-Stop-Shop” website to find almost everything you might have tried to find searching the internet.

Almost a hundred people have been involved; collecting web links to documents now houses on the VFC website, collecting thousands of web links for various issues, illnesses and benefits. Creating forums for all eras of service and two forums one just for men and one just for woman where you can go question, comment, share medical and personal concerns, what ever you'd like it to be.

We also have a forum with a licensed Mental Health Worker, again where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average 1,700 hits per day, and downloads average 1,000 per day with a total 3,235,642 visitors as of Friday.

If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it's FREE of charge! You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send you a confirmation E-Mail. Once received, click on the link to be authorized automatically.

[www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)

- Documents Library with over 15,905 documents on-line (Updated: 12/12/16)
- FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers
- Multiple Forums
  - o Afghanistan Veterans
  - o FMP - Foreign Medial Program
  - o Gulf War & Desert Storm Veterans
  - o Iraq Veterans
  - o Korean Veterans
  - o Men Veterans Forum
  - o Mental Health for Veterans
  - o Political Issues
  - o Suggestion Box
  - o The Mess Hall
  - o VA Hospitals and Medical Centers
  - o Veteran Affairs
  - o Vietnam Veterans
  - o Welcome Mat
  - o Women Veterans Forum
  - o WW II Veterans
- Job Postings
- Memorial Pages (Updated: 10/10/16)
- News (Articles On-Line: 6,399)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,544, Added 1 New Links (Updated: 04/05/17)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail:

[Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

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## Featured Deal: SeaWorld FREE Admission

SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment salutes those who serve through their "Waves of Honor" program. Active duty, Reservists, and National Guardsman (and three direct dependents) can obtain one free admission to any of its amusement parks each year, including Busch Gardens. [View this deal.](#)

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<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

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## New Blended Retirement System

Air Force members have training and informational resources to research their options during 2017 for the new Blended Retirement System (BRS). The [BRS Leader Training](#) provides an overview for educational purposes and is available to those without a Common Access Card, including family members. Eligible service members are highly encouraged to discuss their personal situations with a personal financial counselor and educator at the Airman and Family Readiness Center. Also, BRS information is continuously updated on [myPers](#). Click 'Retirement' from any military landing page.

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[Links to Other Stories](#)

- 1) A Village of 50 Tiny Houses is Being Built so Homeless Veterans Have a Place to Live
- 2) Benefits for 90,000 Navy veterans on the line in D.C.
- 3) Cost and VA skepticism still hound bid to expand Agent Orange-related benefits
- 4) Dog Retires, Reunites With Wingman
- 5) House panel will look into dispute over Agent Orange benefits for Navy veterans
- 6) Joint Base reports high levels of two hazardous chemicals in water
- 7) Navy vets see sinister move behind effort to deny them Agent Orange benefits
- 8) U.S. honors Veterans on first official National Vietnam War Veterans Day
- 9) VA secretary backs major legislation to fire incompetent, corrupt employees in historic move
- 10) Young Man Kills Himself After Reportedly Taking 'Walk Of Shame' At Target

You can help VFC by reading articles posted and commenting at the bottom and rate the articles. If you don't have an account, sign up today, it's FREE. Your comments and rankings tell us what type of information you want most.

Check us out today: [www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)



**Support Caregiver Expansion**

We applaud Senators Patty Murray, Susan Collins, and Representative Jim Langevin for introducing the "Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act" on March 9, 2017.

DAV has worked diligently for several years as a part of a larger coalition of veterans organizations that promoted the advent of family caregiver support services for severely injured and ill veterans. Congress finally responded by enacting Public Law 111-163, the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010. However, that law limited services and supports to family caregivers of veterans who were injured or became severely ill in military service only on or after September 11, 2001. That omission left thousands of veterans' families without the level of caregiver support and services they have needed because those veterans' health challenges, many from war injuries, occurred before that effective date.

If enacted, the Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act would responsibly and finally address these families' needs on the same basis as those of veterans injured after September 11, 2001. Ultimately, when fully implemented, the bill would improve the lives of tens of thousands of veteran families, and will save the federal government a significant amount of resources that otherwise would need to be spent to provide institutional solutions to these veterans' health challenges and health maintenance. This bill is both beneficial to these families and a taxpayer-friendly measure.

Please write your elected representatives to urge co-sponsorship and support of passage of S. 591 and H.R. 1472. A letter has been prepared for this purpose or you may write your own to express your views. As always, thank you for your support.

Click [HERE](#) and send your message!

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**Army Devices Authorized on Commendation Medal**

The V device worn on Army Commendation Medal and other awards, stands for 'valor.' Joining the V are two new devices: the 'C' and 'R' devices, where C denotes 'combat' and the R means 'remote.' Both are described fully in Military Personnel Message 17-095, titled 'Implementation of Department of Defense Guidance for the Newly Established 'C' and 'R' Devices'. The combat C device is earned 'through service or achievement under combat conditions.' The intent of the C device is to distinguish a particular award as having been earned in combat. The remote R device is rated when 'a Soldier remotely, but directly, contributed to a combat operation.' For more details, see this [article](#).

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**~We Proudly Support our  
Military Personnel & Families~**

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If you received this newsletter as a courtesy or a forward from a friend or relative, you can sign up to receive in your E-mail every week.

[CLICK HERE](#)



## **Bills to Increase Payment for Adult Day Health Care in State Homes**

Senator Orrin Hatch (UT) and Representative Lee Zeldin [NY-1] introduced legislation (S. 324 and H.R. 1005) designed to increase the availability of adult day health care services for severely disabled veterans. If enacted, the legislation would increase the current reimbursement to state veterans homes for the provision of adult day health care services to severely disabled veterans who are eligible for, but do not receive, full-time skilled nursing home care paid for by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), with no cost to the veteran.

Under current law, veterans who require nursing home care due to a service-connected disability or who have a VA disability rating of 70% or more can receive full-time nursing home care inside a state veterans home at no cost; however, the law does not allow those same severely disabled veterans to benefit from adult day health care, which is a less costly non-institutional alternative many prefer. S. 324 and H.R. 1005 would amend existing law to authorize VA to pay state veterans homes a per diem rate that is 65% of the per diem otherwise payable for full-time skilled nursing home care for these same severely disabled veterans.

Adult day health care, which is currently offered by only three state

homes, provides comprehensive medical, nursing and personal care services combined with social activities for physically or cognitively impaired adults. Under this program, veterans are brought to the state home for 6-8 hours where they can receive any necessary medical care -- including physical, occupational or speech therapy -- as well as nutritional and social services. Adult day health care allows severely disabled veterans who might otherwise need skilled nursing services to receive these services several times a week while continuing to live at home.

If enacted, these bills would enable more state veterans homes across the country to offer adult day health care programs for these deserving veterans. The legislation would also provide important relief and support for their family caregivers. DAV Resolution 127 calls for legislation to provide state homes with greater flexibility in providing eligible veterans medically necessary long-term supports and services.

Please contact your elected officials and urge them to support passage of the State Veterans Home Adult Day Health Care Improvement Act of 2017 (S. 324 and H.R. 1005) during the 115th Congress.

Click [HERE](#) and send your message!

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**Veterans-For-Change, Inc.**

**Riverside County, CA**

**Visit our website today**

[www.Veterans-For-Change.org](http://www.Veterans-For-Change.org)

**Serving those who served!**

**Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and Family**

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<b>Distribution</b>	
Express Mail	144,730
Boston	74,858
Courtesy Copies	3,500
Department of VA	12,641
DoD	29,773
Face Book Pages	3,513
Google	28,511
Los Angeles	134,657
Microsoft	9,604
National Guard	4051
New York	152,127
Other Social Media	41,994
San Francisco	78,084
Twitter	41
US House of Reps & Staff	986
US Senators & Staff	106
University of So. California	5,133
US Air Force	25,622
US Army	65,582
US Marines	28,143
US Navy	37,360
Veterans	19,082,540
Washington DC	141,398
Yahoo	134
	20,105,088

Please do not reply to this E-Mail, this is an unattended E-Mail address, please send all correspondence to: [Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

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