



# Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

## *A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, June 25, 2017

Volume 8, Issue 26

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

There are several issues that have plagued Veterans and widows for many years, and some even decades.

Some date back to WWI and WWII and while we're still waiting to hear what is going to come of the Sec. VA Shulkin to do about Mustard Gas, at least now he's admitting it was and remains a health problem for many Veterans.

Another were the Burn Pits and while we have always recommended to all Veterans to register with what ever registry in out there, Burn Pits are coming up again and again and more strongly now. So if you have not registered, please do it today. [Burn Pit Registry](#)

Agent Orange also has had a registry for several years, so if you served in an era when AO was used, and you were exposed to it, please do yourself and your family a favor and go to the [Agent Orange Registry](#) and get it done!

Most know politicians will make promises just to garner your vote at

election time, some will fulfill those promises, but are notorious for failing to follow-up and/or support their own promise.

One such promise was to resolve the repealing of the SBP/DIC widows benefit offset which has literally been stealing from Veterans widows for decades to the tune of \$1,200.00 to now what amounts to \$1,900.00 per month.

And for at least the past eleven years one member or another in Congress has promised to resolve this issue. And even taking an average of \$1,550.00 per month that means Congress and the VA have stolen \$204,600.00 over the past eleven years from Widows.

Further down in this newsletter, we've repeated yet again our plea for everyone to please click on the link and send off the pre-written E-Mails to your reps in DC requesting their support of passage and correction of this egregious error.

It won't back track and pay out what has already been stolen, but it will remove it and jack up the pay outs due to all widows past, current and future.

Please, think of your spouse as it may someday effect them too and send off the E-Mail, and also help make it go viral and copy and paste into an E-Mail and send to your entire E-Mail data base, but be sure to do so using BCC to protect all your friends addresses. Ask each of them to please send off the E-Mail, then forward the E-Mail they received from you to their friends and family asking all of them to do the same things.

I don't wish ill will on anyone ever, but we do need to look out for everyone, even spouses! Those benefits will surely come in handy if and when the time comes.

Five weeks we put the call out to everyone for stories they would share with us to send to members of Congress.

We've received quite a few more stories and have been blast faxing to all members of Congress since six weeks ago Sunday non-stop.

It's not too late, so if you'd like to share your story and help put faces on the

problems that you face in your everyday life in dealing with the VA, please send them on to my e-mail address.

Only rules are no last names, no social security numbers, no phone numbers, only first name, city and state. All other information would be redacted and isn't needed so we can insure the protections of everyone.

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

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

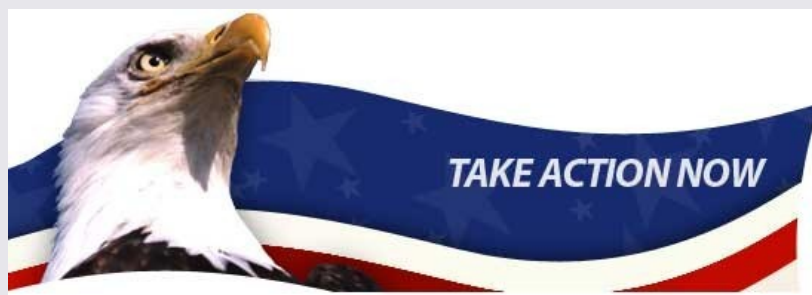
Founder

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

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## **VA Decision Could Impact 370,000 Claims**

VA Secretary David Shulkin announced that he is dropping VA's appeal of a case that forces VA to pay veterans claims for reimbursement for private emergency care. Pulling the appeal means VA intends to begin covering private sector emergency care for any VA-enrolled veteran, even if they have alternative health insurance that pays part of their emergency care costs. As many as 370,000 veterans with pending claims could benefit. Read full article [here](#).



## **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!](#)



## **Franchise Opportunities for Veterans**

Have you thought about having your own business? Owning a franchise is a great opportunity, especially for Veterans. Franchisors are actively seeking Veterans for Franchisees. In fact, multiple Franchisors provide substantial discounts on their Franchise Fee. Why? Veterans are disciplined and know how to follow a process. That is exactly what they are looking for in a Franchisee. Plus, they are grateful for your service to our country.

If you have interest, how do you know where do you start?

1. Start thinking about what kind of business you'd like to run. Where are your interests? What do you enjoy doing? This is where we can help.
2. Financing – do you have money that you can put down on your business? If not, we can help you with resources for grants and loans.
3. Read the book "[Franchise MBA](#)" by Nick Neonakis, MBA. It is a comprehensive guide that brings together experience and fact to give you the tools you need to understand which franchise is right for you.

If you would like to learn more about looking at your own franchise, please give us a call. I work with hundreds of franchise companies that represent all of the industry categories. My services simply assist prospective clients, in researching and selecting available franchise businesses that best suit

desired lifestyles and financial goals. The research, qualification, and application service we provide costs you absolutely nothing; I am paid by the Franchisor if and when you open your doors.

We look forward to assisting you!

Janice Charles

The Franchise Consulting Company

[janice@thefranchiseconsultingcompany.com](mailto:janice@thefranchiseconsultingcompany.com)

303-319-5186



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## **Army General Testifies on BRAC**

The costly excess infrastructure in the U.S. Army could be used to reduce maintenance backlogs on about 33,000 facilities that are now deemed in 'poor or failing condition.' Another round of base realignment and closure would mean that these excess facilities around the Army could be closed, and would no longer need to be maintained. Lt. Gen. Gwen Bingham, the Army's assistant chief of staff for installation management, told lawmakers

during a recent hearing on Capitol Hill that the Army has a deferred maintenance backlog on infrastructure of about \$10.8 billion. That account means more than one in five buildings are in poor condition. Testimonies and a video of the hearing are available on the [U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations website](#).

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

- 1) [Army Contracting: Leadership Lacks Information Needed To Evaluate and Improve Operations.](#)
  - 2) [Army Weapon System Requirements: Need to Address Workforce Shortfalls to Make Necessary Improvements.](#)
  - 3) [Defense Infrastructure: Additional Data and Guidance Needed for Alternatively Financed Energy Projects.](#)
  - 4) [Veterans Affairs: Improved Management Processes Are Necessary for IT Systems That Better Support Health Care.](#)
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## Veterans call the President. Whose VA is it?

We need everyone to call The President's VA Hotline @ **855-948-2311** 8:00AM till 5:30PM ET and tell them about the Veterans plight with the VA denying presumption of exposure to Agent Orange and various other illnesses related to Agent Orange. Tell them your story.

This would also apply to Veterans from Korea, Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan as well.

This is YOUR CHANCE to get the message through to the President . Be patient and wait for the operator to talk to you .

***The line is being manned by military spouses, parents and veterans. All are volunteers. Please show them the respect they deserve.***

And if you have not written your story and sent it to me, please do keep them coming. We're not stopping the attack from the side of Congress either!

Send your stories to: [Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org)

Just please keep in mind, no last names, street addresses, social security numbers or phone numbers. Just First Name, City and State.

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**CONTACT YOUR  
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!**

**To Call your Representative:**

**202-225-2305**

**To Call your Senators:**

**202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553**

**To call Different Members of Congress:**

**202-224-3121**

**TOLL FREE: 866-272-6622**

**PLEASE... STOP Making Excuses!**

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

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**VA Reverses Call for 'IU' Benefit Cuts**

VA Secretary David Shulkin conceded that ending IU for elderly vets was a poor choice from a menu of cost-saving options. Shulkin told Congress that he will work with them to find a way to fund his Choice replacement plan, CARE, without administratively ending [Individual Unemployability \(IU\)](#) eligibility next year for 208,000 seriously disabled veterans age 62 or older. ([Read about the original plan to cut IU](#)).

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**DoD Launches Blended Retirement  
Calculator**

The Department of Defense (DoD) has officially launched a new tool to help servicemembers plan for the new [Blended Retirement System \(BRS\)](#). The [DoD BRS 'Opt-In' Comparison Calculator](#) gives BRS eligible servicemembers their first opportunity for an individualized comparison of retirement systems. The comprehensive tool, in combination with the



mandatory [BRS Opt-In Course](#), will assist the nearly 1.7 million opt-in eligible servicemembers and their families make an informed decision on whether or not to elect the new retirement system. The BRS goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2018. Servicemembers can get free, personal support from an accredited personal financial counselor or manager through their installation's Military and Family Support Center.

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## **VA Secretary Announces e-Health Record**

U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Dr. David J. Shulkin, recently announced his decision on the next-generation Electronic Health Record (EHR) system for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Dr. Shulkin's full statement is available on the Department of Veterans Affairs [website](#).

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## **Oppose Benefit Cuts to Retirement Age Disabled Veterans Don't Reduce Disabled Vets Benefits**

The Trump Administration's FY 2018 budget request reduces some VA benefits.

The proposed budget eliminates the Individual Unemployability benefit payments to retirement-age disabled veterans. Under current policies, the Individual Unemployability program allows VA to award payouts at the 100-percent disabled rate to veterans who cannot find work due to service-connected injuries, even if they are not deemed 100-percent disabled. The Administration has proposed stopping those payouts once veterans are eligible for Social Security retirement benefits. This cut would impact more than 225,000 veterans currently receiving this benefit.

Veterans receiving benefits checks from the VA would also have their annual cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) reduced or "round down" to the nearest dollar.

Use the [Action Center](#) to ask your legislators to oppose these benefit cuts.

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## **New Tool Helps Vets Compare Treatment Options**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched a new online tool that will help Veterans compare various treatment options for post-traumatic stress disorder. The [PTSD Treatment Decision Aid](#) is a free, interactive online tool that helps educate patients about effective treatment options for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and encourages them to

participate actively in decisions about their care. Users can watch videos of providers explaining different treatment options and what to expect with those treatments and hear from Veterans who have benefited from them.

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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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**Links to Other Stories**

- 1) 'There Was No Escaping It': Iraq Vets Are Becoming Terminally Ill And Burn Pits May Be To Blame
- 2) Controversial "homeless wall" goes up in California
- 3) Don't Abandon Choice for Vets
- 4) Fresno VA Medical Center's Nurse of the Year
- 5) Making the VA Accountable Again
- 6) Medal of Honor Recipient Arthur J. Jackson Passes Away at 92
- 7) PVA Applauds Passage of VA Accountability Bill
- 8) VA Chief Withdraws Staab Appeal; Vows to Replace 'IU' Pay Cut Too
- 9) VA Secretary: Money for Choice program will 'dry up' by mid-August
- 10) VA still planning to round down benefit payouts
- 11) Vision for VA: Fewer maternity services and cancer docs, more private care options

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)

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## VA Disability Compensation

Did you know the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers monthly tax-free disability compensation to Veterans who qualify? Do you have a physical or mental disability? Did your injury or disease occur while in service? Is there a connection between your current disability and military service? If you answered 'yes' to these questions, you may be eligible. Learn more about disability compensation and how to apply at [Explore.VA.gov](http://Explore.VA.gov).

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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 2,200 hits per day, and downloads average 1,000 per day with a total 3,365,773 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 16,034 documents on-line (Updated: 5/19/17)
- 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: 6,528)
  - Polls
  - Web Links, more than 3,591, Added 6 New Links (Updated: 06/21/17)

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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## **VA Physician Ambassador Program**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched the [Physician Ambassador Program](#) in an effort to recruit volunteer medical providers at the more than 1,700 VA health-care facilities across the nation. The physician and clinician “ambassadors” are qualified, trained and licensed health providers who will meet the same requirements as VA professionals in terms of credentials, supervision and evaluation. The new program will enhance access to urgent care, rural health care and emergency medicine for Veterans. Physicians or health-care providers interested in volunteering as a part of the Physician Ambassador Program should contact their local [VA medical center](#).

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[Subscribe Here](#)

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## **Veterans Legacy Program**

The Veterans Legacy Program is offering a new way for Americans connect with their history. Through the program, the Department of Veterans' Affairs' (VA's) [National Cemetery Administration](#) is forging partnerships with academic institutions to engage students and professors alike in discovering the stories of service and sacrifice found in VA's national cemeteries. The Veterans Legacy Program is partnering with three universities: University of Central Florida, Black Hills State University and San Francisco State University. Visit the [Veterans Legacy Program webpage](#).

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## **“We Proudly Support our Military Personnel & Families”**

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.

**[Subscribe Here](#)**



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**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!**

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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