



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, May 27, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 21



This-N-That

Many of us make plans to enjoy a long weekend filled with family, friends and travel this Memorial Day, we also come together as a nation to honor our fallen servicemembers, who have made the greatest sacrifice for our freedoms.

Our pause on this solemn day first started after the Civil War, when it was known as “Decoration Day.” Over time, it became known as Memorial Day, and today it serves for us to remember casualties from conflicts spanning the Revolutionary War to the

Global War on Terror. Sept. 11 was nearly 17 years ago, and since that time we have lost more than 6,900 Americans serving in combat zones.

If you've never attended Memorial Day ceremonies at any of our national cemeteries, I encourage you to do so; such a gesture means everything to the families of those killed in action.

The past couple of weeks I have talked about Lt Bobby Ross and AFOA (Autistic Farmers of America), to give you a little more, Bobby, and a Korean War Buddy, and Desert Storm Buddy are getting Veterans to help autistic folks to become farmers.

I had also asked for people to write to me and tell me their story if you or someone you knew had Autism, Asperger Syndrome, and now I am adding Tourette Syndrome as it's all part of the same family of illness.

If you are or know of someone with Autism who could or needs direction, a purpose in life, security, safety, and the ability to be productive, please do let me know and I will gladly forward on the request for information to Lt. Bobby Ross.

Our goal is to further help Veterans in as many ways that the VA doesn't, can't or won't help!

Update on the website, some of the repairs have been completed, creating a new account and document downloads have been repaired. Further repairs are scheduled, as well as software upgrades and updates.

Our former Director of Operation Mail Call, Betty Hidalgo-Rabuse has had her second round of chemo treatment, and has been transported back to Modesto from San Francisco where she is closer to home, and will receive the remaining four chemo treatments.

Betty had been given a pin-point radiation treatment to deaden nerves that were causing her great pain. And for the most part it has helped, and the doctors have said a little more time and should be 100% pain free.

So please keep Betty and James in your prayers.

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



5 Things to avoid this Memorial Day

While there are dozens of ways you can honor America's fallen this Memorial Day, there are a few things to avoid doing to maintain the spirit of the day.

1. Don't wish anyone a "Happy Memorial Day"

This is not Christmas— Memorial Day was not founded in joy with the promise of bringing glee each year. It was established as a way for the country to set aside time to honor the troops who had given their lives in service to America.

In 1868, Gen. John Logan declared the day for "the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion,

and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land.”

Despite what the day has transitioned to in American culture, it was established to honor and remember America’s fallen.

1. **Don’t thank the current troops** At least, don’t thank them just because it’s Memorial Day. They deserve respect and gratitude every day of the year, but this day is set aside specifically for America’s fallen warriors from every war. Armed Forces Day is a day to honor those currently serving.

America’s veterans are honored during November on Veteran’s Day, when we aim to remember and appreciate the sacrifices of all veterans. But, Memorial Day allows the country to focus on those service-members who are no longer with us—an important distinction.

1. **Don’t disregard its importance** Though discounts abound for nearly everything from cars to furniture to pool supplies, that’s not what the holiday is about. When we focus only on the backyard barbecues or discounts on refrigerators, we allow the true meaning to become lost.

Grill some amazing steaks, and find the perfect mattress on sale, just don't forget to raise a glass in honor of those servicemen and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

1. Don't forget it exists

Even worse than allowing the day to become synonymous with deep discounts and potato salad, is letting it slip from the public's mind completely. When it becomes simply a highly-anticipated extra morning of sleeping in, instead of the day of reflection and appreciation it was meant to be, we disrespect our fallen troops.

2. Don't let politics keep you from rendering respect


Even if you don't agree with the idea of war, or the reasons America goes to war, or the policies of a particular president who was the Commander in Chief during a specific war, it doesn't matter. People have defended the people and interests of America for over 200 years, and your right to disagree with the reasons for war should be separate from your opinion of the troops themselves.

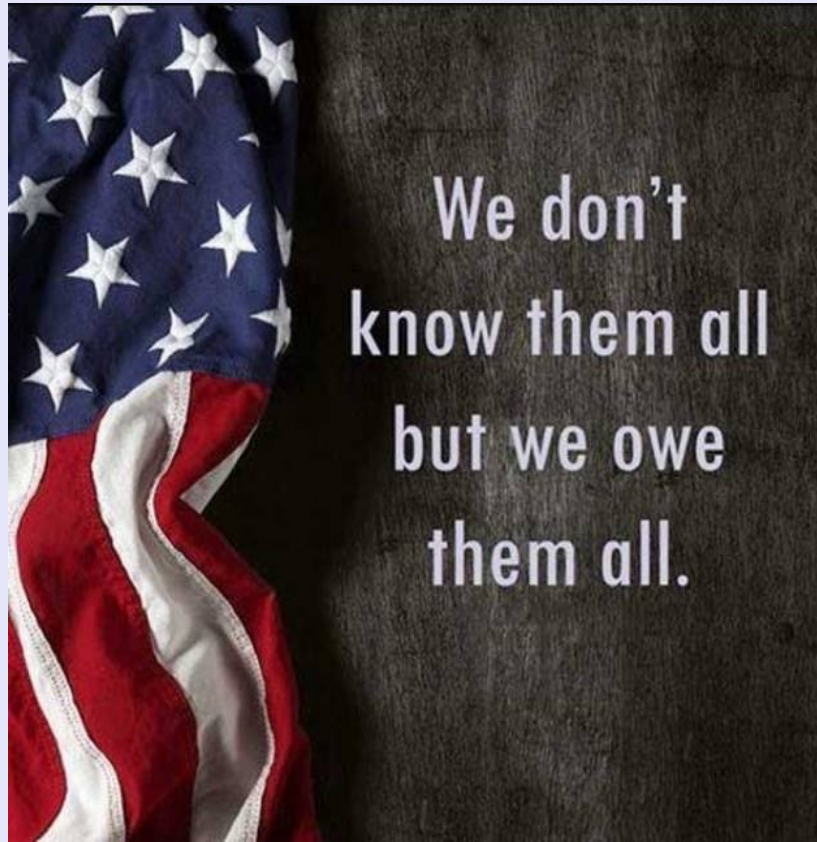
Courtesy: Jen Smith



National Memorial Day Concert

The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) will present the National Memorial Day Concert live from the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol from 8-9:30 p.m., ET, on Sunday, May 27, 2018. Actors Joe Mantegna and Gary Sinise will host the proceedings. 2018 marks the 150th anniversary of Memorial Day, originally known as Decoration Day and first commemorated at Arlington National Cemetery. The concert will also be live streamed on PBS as well as You Tube and Facebook. It will be available in video on demand May 28 to June 10, 2018. Please check your local television listings for the correct time and date of airing in your area. For more information, visit the PBS [website](#). For more on Memorial Day activities and history, visit [Memorial Day](#) section.





**Consider Helping the Families of the
Fallen This Memorial Day**

With Memorial Day almost upon us, everyone at TREA: The Enlisted Association would like to take a moment to highlight the activities of our friends over at Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS). They put on programs year round to help the families of the fallen deal with their grief and move on with their lives after their loved one gave the last full measure of devotion to our great country.

If you are looking for a way to support them, please go [here](#).

Please let others know about this very worthy cause. Thank you.

Source: TREA



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 2,100 hits per day, and downloads average 1,200 per day with a total **4,086,387** 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

- Documents Library with over 16,387 documents on-line (Updated: 02/20/18)
- 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 (Counselor Needed)
 - 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: 01/11/18)
- News (Articles On-Line: 7,379)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,645, Added 12 New Links (Updated: 04/24/18)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages,
E-Mail: Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org



Troops In Line For Biggest Pay Raise Since 2010

The House of Representatives and the Senate have each moved their version of the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act through the Armed Services Committees, meaning that absent any amendments to the contrary, Congress could give troops their biggest pay raise in nine years next January.

The House passed their version of the NDAA today.

On Tuesday, members of the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel panel advanced their section of the annual defense authorization bill, which includes a 2.6 percent pay raise and a host of other military specialty pay renewals for 2019.

A 2.6% increase means an almost \$700 annual boost in pay all the way down at the E-1 level.

Although the final bill still faces months of negotiations between House and Senate leaders, the identical pay raises signal that troops' paychecks won't be a significant stumbling point in that work. It also matches the White House request for military pay, unveiled back in February.

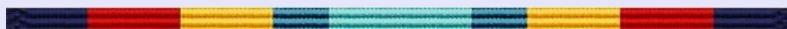
The Military healthcare system is unlikely to see any large changes this year, after the raft of changes that went into effect this year.

Source: TREA



National Memorial Day Parade

The National Memorial Day Parade will be held Monday, 28 May in Washington, DC. It will be a great day. This year, the parade will feature a special tribute to the American veterans of World War I that will include a parade float sponsored by the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission. Broadcast live to over 100 affiliate TV stations around the entire U.S., and also be live-streamed via Military.com and other online outlets, this parade is our nation's largest Memorial Day event, drawing hundreds of thousands of spectators to the National Mall to pay tribute to those who have served. Learn more about the parade on the WWI Centennial Commission [website](#). For more on Memorial Day activities and history, visit [Memorial Day](#) section.



OUR DEBT TO THE
HEROIC MEN AND VALIANT
WOMEN IN THE SERVICE
OF OUR COUNTRY CAN
NEVER BE REPAID. THEY
HAVE EARNED OUR
UNDYING GRATITUDE.
AMERICA WILL NEVER
FORGET THEIR SACRIFICES.

PRESIDENT HARRY S TRUMAN



Senate Passes VA MISSION Act

The US Senate yesterday passed the VA MISSION Act, which consolidates the Choice Program and the other existing outside community care programs that the VA runs into one program.

The vote was 92-5 and it is now on its way to the White House. The \$55 billion bill will change how the VA pays for private care, expand the VA Caregiver Program to veterans of all eras (over the next two years) and starts a review of the VA's aging infrastructure.

Passage of the legislation helps to avert a June deadline of money running out for the current VA Choice program.

TREA: The Enlisted Association will keep an eye on the way the law is implemented. If you or anyone you know has problems with it, do not hesitate to reach out to our Washington Office at 703-684-1981 to share your concerns with us.

Source: TREA





Seeking Referrals or Prior Authorizations for Specialty Care with TRICARE

At some point, you may need specialty care that your primary care manager (PCM) or general physician can't provide. He or she may refer you to a specialty provider, like a cardiologist, dermatologist or obstetrician. Under some TRICARE programs, you may need a referral or prior authorization from your PCM to seek care from a specialty provider.

Read the full article [here](#).



LT Bobby Ross



Fifty years ago I was a 1st Lieutenant in the 101st Airborne Division fighting the Communist enemy in the Tet Offensive in the War in Vietnam. I lost so many men under my command in combat I can not remember the number. When I lost one platoon, I was given another. My last platoon command was a Rat Patrol. Ten jeeps mounted with M60 machine guns. I did a magnificent job of not losing one single man. I left Vietnam and was out of the Army in February, 1969. A short time later in early May 1969, I got word that my Rat Patrol Platoon had received orders to march up Hamburger Hill. They were wiped out.

Eighteen years ago, in my Music Row offices in Nashville, I composed this "**What Is Memorial Day?**". I make a point to share it every Memorial Day. This is a special day for me every year. A very serious one, too. I do my best to remember and respect all those in our nation's history who have given their all for my freedom.

LT Bobby Ross



**Over 4,000 Soldiers Just Lost Their
BAH**

According to Military.com, about 4,200 soldiers will see a cut in their final paycheck this month after their Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) payment was revoked when they failed to update their records by March 1.

BAH pays service members an entitlement of up to thousands of dollars monthly based on factors including zip code and paygrade.

But soldiers are required to have documentation proving eligibility, such as a marriage or birth certificate, as well as a DA Form 5960 uploaded to the Army's personnel system, known as iPERMS.

An official Army message released Jan. 2 gave soldiers until March 1 to update their documents or lose the payment, which could be up to several thousand dollars.

Only currently deployed soldiers are exempt from the update mandate, officials said.

The currently deployed will need to comply with the policy 60 days after any post-deployment leave, or risk having their pay reduced.

Dual-military couples are both given a BAH

payment at the "without dependents rate," unless they have children. In that case, one of the members receives the "with dependents rate," while the other does not.

The documentation crackdown was first reported late last summer, long before the Army officially released its mandate for updates early this year. At the time, about 60,000 soldiers were missing BAH documentation.

Soldiers can restore their benefit, and receive as back pay any allotments they lost thanks to missing records, by updating iPERMS through their human resources office or unit personnel actions officer, the release said.

Source: TREA



Hearing on VA VISN Restructuring

The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs held a hearing on Tuesday to assess the governance structure of VA's Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISN). VA currently has 18 VISNs which were designed in 1995 to decentralize the Veterans Health Administration's budgetary, planning and decision-making functions to promote accountability and improve oversight of daily facility operations. Chairman Phil Roe, M.D., discussed the alarming failure by the VISNs and VA's Central Office to resolve problems at local medical facilities. [Watch the hearing](#) or read the [VA Inspector General's testimony](#).





VA Updates Disability Rating Schedule to Better Align with Modern Medicine

The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced that effective May 13, it has updated portions of the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD, or rating schedule) that evaluate the organs of special sense eye conditions, as well as gynecological conditions and disorders of the breast.

The VASRD is the collection of federal regulations used by Veterans Benefits Administration claims processors to evaluate the severity of disabilities and assign disability ratings.

VA is in the process of updating all 15 body systems of the VASRD to more accurately reflect modern medicine and provide clearer rating decisions.

"VA remains committed to providing Veterans with the benefits they have earned through their service," said VA Acting Secretary Robert Wilkie. "And, with modern medicine advancing at a rapid rate, it's important to ensure VA's disability rating schedule reflects these advancements."

Several revisions were made to the general rating formula for diseases of the eye, including a new definition of incapacitating episodes that more clearly measures level of disability. Additionally, three diagnostic codes - diabetic retinopathy, retinal dystrophy and post-chiasmal disorders - were added. No conditions were removed from either portion of the rating schedule.

Several diagnostic codes were added to the schedule for gynecological conditions and disorders of the breast, including malignant neoplasms, benign neoplasms and other injuries of the breast. Several more diagnostic codes were restructured and revised.

Updates to dental and oral conditions and conditions related to the endocrine system were completed in 2017.

By updating these portions of the rating schedule, VA allows claims processors to make more consistent decisions with greater ease and ensure Veterans understand these decisions. VA remains committed to improving its service to Veterans continuously and staying at the forefront of modern medicine.

Source: TREA



Find Military Appreciation Month Discounts

May is Military Appreciation Month. Military.com has compiled a list of discounts and services offered to servicemembers, veterans and their families by businesses and organizations in honor of Military Appreciation Month. Check out the list of [Military Appreciation Discounts](#).



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



GI Bill Rates Changing Soon

The VA has announced Post-9/11 GI Bill rates for the 2018-2019 school year, which will take effect on August 1. Changes include new rates for private and foreign school GI Bill payments, flight training, licensing/certification/national testing, monthly housing allowances, and more. For full details, see [this post](#).



Legislative Wrap-up

On Monday, the House passed more than a dozen veterans bills, such as H.R. 1972, [VA Billing Accountability Act](#), which authorizes VA to waive copayment requirements when the veteran is not billed in a timely manner; H.R. 4958, [Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2018](#), which would provide a cost-of-living adjustment for VA compensation benefits; and H.R. 4334, [Improving Oversight of Women Veterans' Care Act of 2017](#), which would require VA to submit reports on access to gender-specific care in the community and environment of care standards for women veterans. Read [other bills passed](#) by the House. In addition to the VA MISSION Act, the Senate passed the [Tribal HUD-VASH Act](#) which would ensure Native American veterans are able to access federal rental and housing assistance for homeless and at-risk veterans. The Senate also passed H.R. 4910, the [Veterans Cemetery Benefit Correction Act](#), which would require the Department of the Interior to provide grave liners for veterans buried in National Park Service cemeteries. H.R. 4910 heads to the president's desk. All other bills must be considered by the other chambers of Congress.



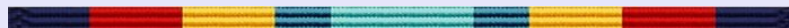


LA Union Station • Historic Ticketing Hall • 800 N Alameda St • Los Angeles, CA 90012

Veterans Summer Slam Employment Fair

Friday, June 29, 2018 • 9am – 2pm

LinkedIn Tips for Professional Networking • Job Fair



Veteran ID Card Application Process

Before You Start

Make sure you have a valid copy of your state or federal issued ID, a personal photo to appear on your card, and a copy of your last/final DD-214 or other official military discharge document that reflects an Honorable or General (Under Honorable Conditions) character of discharge.

Part I: Sign In/Set up Your Account

- 1) Visit <https://www.vets.gov/veteran-id-card> and sign into your Vets.gov account.
- 2) Sign in by selecting one of the following options:

"Sign in with DS Logon," "Sign in with My HealthVet," or "Sign in with IDme."

- 3) After you are logged into your account click "Request a Veteran ID Card" and proceed to Part III.

Part II: Verify Your Identity

- 1) If you used your DS Logon account to sign into Vets.gov and you have a basic or advanced (non-premium) account, you'll need to verify your identity through ID.me to finish setting up your account.
- 2) If you used ID.me to sign into your Vets.gov account and the "Apply for VA ID Card" link is

"grayed out" you must click "Verify your Identity" to finish setting up your account.

3) After your identity is verified you will be directed to the VIC site.

Part III: Complete Your VIC Request

1) Verify your personal information.

2) Upload a valid copy of your state or federal issued ID, a personal photo, and a copy of your DD-214 (if needed).

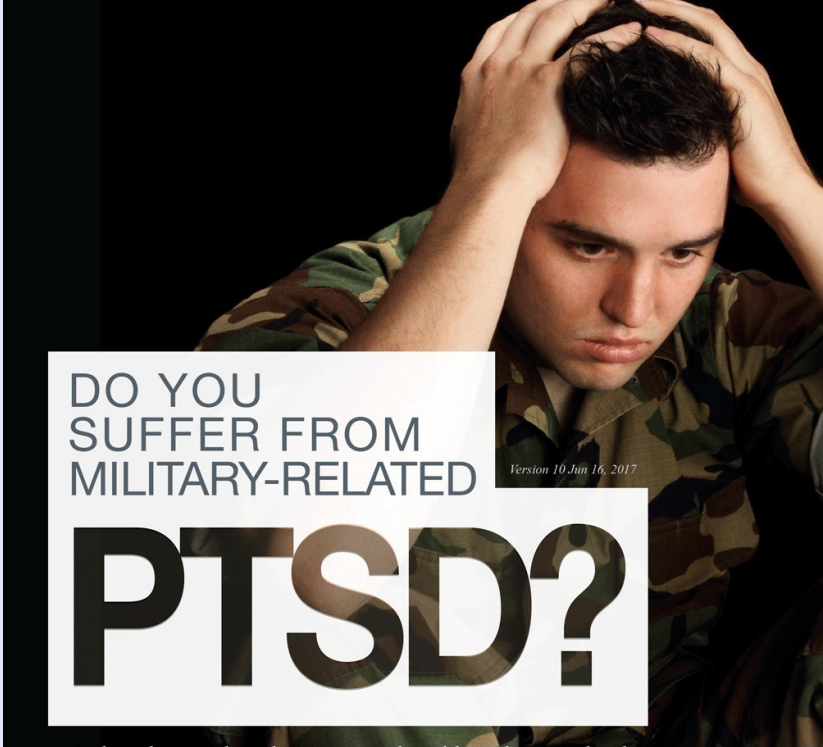
3) Once you have confirmed that your information is accurate and uploaded all required documents, click "Preview Card" and then click "Request Card."

Are You Having Issues Submitting a VIC Request? We Want to Help!

If you experienced issues submitting your VIC request using Vets.gov, you can use [AccessVA](#) to submit your application using your DS Logon or ID.me username and password.

Send an email to vic@va.gov if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Source: TREA



DO YOU
SUFFER FROM
MILITARY-RELATED

Version 10 Jun 16, 2017

PTSD?

**Veterans Crisis Line:
1-800-273-8255 & Press 1
Ntl Call Center for Homeless Vets
1-877-424-3838**

**New Leaders for VA Benefits
Administration**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that Paul R. Lawrence assumed office May 15 as the department's new Under Secretary for Benefits. Lawrence is a former Army captain and airborne school graduate, and has served in a number of key positions in the accounting industry, focusing primarily in the area of federal government practices. VA also announced that Thomas J. Murphy, currently the Executive in Charge of the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), will become the new VBA Midwest Area Director, in St. Louis, Mo. Also, Margarita Devlin will become Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits in VBA.



Understanding TRICARE Providers

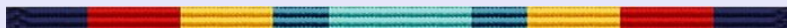
You can visit several types of providers when you need care, regardless of your TRICARE plan. It is important to understand your provider options because who you see impacts both your [out-of-pocket costs](#) and [filing a claim](#). At a minimum, TRICARE must authorize and certify all providers. There are two types of TRICARE-authorized providers: network and non-network. TRICARE network providers accept payment from TRICARE as the full payment for any covered health care services you receive, minus your required out-of-pocket costs. They also file claims for you. Visit the TRICARE [website](#) to learn more about your plan, costs and coverage. Find a provider on TRICARE's [website](#).



**Our values
match yours.**



www.veterans-for-change.org



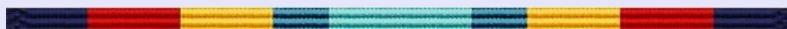
Tips on Federal vs. Private Student Loans

If you don't qualify for federal student loans there is another option available - private student loans, which are made by banks, credit unions, state agencies, or schools. While private student loans are usually not as good of a deal as federal student loans, there may be times when they are a better deal. For full details, see this [post](#).



VA Open to All Appeals

In November 2017, VA launched the [Rapid Appeals Modernization Program](#) (RAMP). RAMP provides a unique opportunity for Veterans with a pending disability compensation appeal to have early access to the more efficient review process outlined in the historic Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 before the law takes effect in February 2019. Previously, a Veteran with a pending appeal could only opt in to RAMP after receiving an invitation from VA. As of April 2, Veterans no longer need an invitation to participate in RAMP. Now, all Veterans with a pending disability compensation appeal can choose to participate in the new decision review process. For more information, read the [VA Vantage Point Blog](#) and visit the [VA website](#).





VA Expands Holistic Health Programs

The VA is adding [18 Whole Health Flagship Sites](#) to its current network of 24 Whole Health Design Sites, expanding its "whole health" initiative. The new program offers peer support involving other veterans with similar medical conditions or military service experience; well being programs such as yoga, tai chi, and mindfulness; and whole health clinical care utilize a holistic approach rather than just handing out pills. For more details, see this [Military Advantage post](#).



'In Flanders Fields' Memorial Event

On the occasion of Memorial Day, and to remember all those who made the ultimate sacrifice "In Flanders Fields" during World War I, Mr. Geert De Proost, General Delegate of the Government of Flanders to the USA, will be hosting the annual "In Flanders Fields" memorial event on May 24, 10am, in New York City featuring the East Coast Doughboys Honor Guard. For more information, visit the [WWI Centennial Commission website](#).



Vet Centers Provide Counseling

Whether you are just returning from combat or your deployment was years ago, your local Vet Center can guide you toward a successful readjustment. Vet Centers provide counseling for (1) transitioning from military service; (2) military sexual trauma; and (3) issues related to marriage, family and bereavement. Vet Center staff will also help you access other VA benefits and services. Eligible individuals do not have to be enrolled in VA health care to receive Vet Center services. Vet Center Call Center counseling is also available 24/7 at 1-877-WAR-VETS (1-877-927-8387). For more information, visit the [VA Vet Centers website](#).



Navy College Improves Website

The [Navy College Program website](#) has launched several significant upgrades to the 'My Education' module of the Tuition Assistance section: (1) Sailors using NCPACE/DL now have 180 days from course completion to have grades recorded; (2) after Sailors submit their TA/NCPACE DL application, additional automated reminders are sent; (3) Navy College staff will be able to enter a detach date from the member's orders to ensure Mobilized Reservists receive TA/NCPACE/DL funding; and (4) there are new features for Sailors when uploading documents to My Education. For the latest information, follow Navy Voluntary Education on [Facebook](#).



Get ready, get hired: CalVet hosts women veterans employment workshop

Yreka – Women veterans will get an opportunity to learn about employment tools and career resources on Saturday, June 16, at the Yreka Public Library during a workshop from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In partnership with Veterans Connect at the Libraries and the California Transition Assistance Program (CalTAP), the CalVet Women Veterans Division is hosting several employment workshops for women veterans throughout California in 2018. These workshops highlight guest speakers, employers, and community partners who give guidance on resume writing, job searches, and job interview skills. Additionally, there will be a segment for one-on-one resume reviews and an opportunity to practice interviewing skills.

The Yreka workshop will feature an engaging, dynamic presentation on “Authentic Personal Branding for Military Veterans” from Air Force veteran and award-winning author, Graciela Tiscareno-Sato. During this highly interactive workshop, veterans learn key self-marketing skills

and how to draw from their military experiences to create a personal statement about themselves. Graciela also gives tips on informational interviews and developing mentor networks. For more information about Graciela, visit:
<https://about.me/gracielaTSato>.

Additional workshops throughout California are scheduled for the summer of 2018. The next workshop will be held on Saturday, July 21, at the Mammoth Lakes Branch Library in Mono county. For additional workshop dates and locations, please visit www.calvet.ca.gov/womenvets.

To register for the workshop in Yreka on June 16, please visit: www.calvet.ca.gov/womenvets. Lunch is provided and travel reimbursements are available for those who qualify. For more information about the workshops, please call 916-653-1402 or email womenveterans@calvet.ca.gov.



BIG Victory for Caregivers and Veterans of All Eras!

On May 23, 2018, America's veterans, their families and caregivers had a big victory in Congress when the Senate voted overwhelmingly -- 92 to 5 -- to

approve the VA MISSION Act, which already passed the House last week. Once signed into law by the President, this historic legislation will expand support to veteran caregivers of ALL eras as well as improve veterans' access to and quality of care, top priorities that DAV has worked for years to accomplish.

The VA MISSION Act (S. 2372) will extend eligibility for VA's comprehensive caregiver assistance program to ALL generations of seriously injured veterans. Currently, VA offers full caregiver benefits only for veterans injured on or after September 11, 2001, leaving family caregivers of veterans injured in earlier conflicts and eras ineligible for this critical support. The new law will require that VA first update the caregiver program's IT system to handle the expanded number of eligible veterans and caregivers, and then extends eligibility to veterans from the Vietnam, Korean and World War II eras. Two years later, eligibility will be phased in for veterans injured between 1975 and 2001, including those hurt during the Gulf War. This legislation represents a huge leap forward in supporting veteran caregivers; however, DAV will not rest until every deserving veteran and caregiver has equitable access to these life-changing benefits.

The VA MISSION Act also contains dozens of provisions to expand access, improve quality and strengthen the VA health care system for all enrolled veterans. The bill reforms VA's Choice and community care programs by requiring the development of integrated health care networks, with VA remaining the coordinator and primary provider of care for enrolled veterans. The current Choice program would sunset after one year and qualified community providers would then be able to participate in VA's integrated networks when VA determines it necessary to fill access gaps so veterans don't have to wait too long or travel too far for the care they have earned.

The VA MISSION Act also requires the development of a long-term plan to modernize, properly align and fund VA's health care facilities to meet the future needs of veterans. The bill's Asset and Infrastructure Review represents a compromise that provides significant checks and balances by Congress, the Administration and outside veteran stakeholders. During congressional consideration of this section of the bill, DAV and other VSOs proposed more than two dozen specific changes that were ultimately accepted to ensure that veterans' needs and preferences remain

central to this process.

The VA MISSION Act contains a number of provisions to improve VA's ability to recruit, hire and retain high-quality doctors, nurses and other clinical staff, such as new incentive bonuses, scholarships and education loan repayment programs. The bill makes critical improvements to VA's telehealth policies to expand access for rural and remote veterans, and also includes language to support VA's efforts to prevent unnecessary use or abuse of opioids.

The VA MISSION Act was developed and introduced by House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Phil Roe (TN) in collaboration with Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Johnny Isakson (GA) and Ranking Member Jon Tester (MT). As Chairman Roe said, "we didn't write a perfect bill; I haven't seen a perfect bill be written yet." However, this carefully crafted compromise represents a balanced approach to ensuring timely access to care while continuing to strengthen the VA health care system that millions of veterans choose and rely on.

When this historic legislation is signed in the coming days by President Trump, please know that

the members of DAV and the DAV Auxiliary -- as well as our family, friends and supporters -- played a critical role in making this happen. Thank you to everyone who took the time to call, visit, write, email, text and tweet their elected officials to build support for this bill. Together, we can and will continue to keep the promise to the men and women who served, especially those who were injured or made ill by their service.



Veteran Crisis Resources

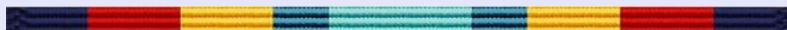
Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1

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



H.R. 5191, Support Establishing VA Research and Clinical Care Centers for Veterans with Alzheimer's Disease

Representative



Mike Coffman (CO) introduced H.R. 5191, a bill directing the

Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to establish at least three Alzheimer's disease research, education, and clinical centers within the Department.

Studies show veterans who experienced brain trauma in the course of their service are at higher risk for developing Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia. Likewise, veterans who experience posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are twice as likely as those without PTSD to develop dementia.

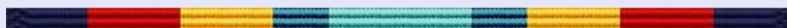
VA's Geriatric and Mental Illness research, education and clinical centers have become models of innovation which synergize the worlds of research, education and patient care using evidence-based practices to develop new patient care models and clinical treatment protocols for veterans. These laboratories also often serve to recruit or retain top-flight scarce medical practitioners from leading universities who are then available to treat veterans and educate the next generation of physicians and independent

practitioners receiving training within the VA. While these clinical centers conduct geriatric research and education none are focused exclusively on Alzheimer's disease and dementia although VA does operate centers focused on Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, and Multiple Sclerosis.

DAV Resolution 061 calls on VA to support integrated and effective models of care for veterans with dementia. Creating these new centers will assist VA in determining how best to meet the unique needs of service-disabled veterans with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia and allow researchers and physicians to focus on developing best practices and effective treatments so that these veterans can be cared for with dignity, compassion and respect.

Please use the prepared letter and ask your Representative to cosponsor and pass H.R. 5191. Thank you for your support of America's disabled veterans.

[Take Action](#)



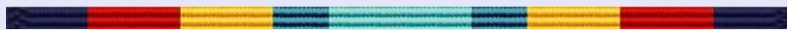
Memorial Day Weekend Activities in Washington

There are a host of activities and events planned for Memorial Day weekend in our nation's capital, May 25-28. The VFW-supported and USAA-sponsored Poppy Wall, located on the southwestern side of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, will be open to the public from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., May 25-28. Those unable to visit the Poppy Wall can visit www.poppyinmemory.com to dedicate a digital poppy to a fallen loved one or as a gesture of appreciation for those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The VFW will also have a benefits information tent set up just east of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, May 26-28. On Monday, VFW Senior Vice Commander Vincent "B.J." Lawrence will lay a wreath during the National Memorial Day Ceremony at [Arlington National Cemetery](#) at 11 a.m. and at the [Vietnam Veterans Memorial Day Ceremony](#) on the National Mall at 1 p.m. Other Memorial Day weekend events include:

- The dress rehearsal for Sunday's [National Memorial Day Concert](#) is on Saturday at 8 p.m. on the west lawn of the Capitol. The concert will be held Sunday evening at 8 p.m. and will air on PBS

stations nationwide.

- [Rolling Thunder XXXI](#) begins at noon on Sunday and will travel from the Pentagon past the National Mall to West Potomac Park.
- National Memorial Day ceremonies will also be held Monday at the [National WWII Memorial](#) at 9 a.m. and the Korean War Veterans Memorial at 5 p.m.
- The [National Memorial Day Parade](#) begins Monday at 2 p.m. along Constitution Avenue.



Links to Other Stories

- 1) [1 million Vets get VA-funded private-sector care through program set to run out of money](#)
- 2) ['A Disinformation Campaign': Double-Amputee Vet Turned Away From VA Without Treatment](#)
- 3) [America's oldest living WWII veteran turns 112, fueled by cigars, Dr Pepper and coffee](#)
- 4) [Commentary: 82nd Airborne's new policy on memorial honors for troops who die by suicide 'sends wrong message'](#)
- 5) [High levels of PFCs found at former base](#)
- 6) [House Committee Approves Extensive VA](#)

Reform Deal

- 7) House Passes Major Overhaul of Veterans Choice Program
- 8) Judicial Watch Scores New Victory for 76-Year-Old Veteran Criminally Prosecuted for Allegedly Taking Photos of American Flags at Veterans Affairs Facility
- 9) Ohio veteran cited for bringing his service dog to VA hospital
- 10) On Special Assignment: Montana Veterans struggle with lasting effects of Agent Orange
- 11) Parking Lot Operator Agrees to Plead Guilty in Scheme to Pay Bribes and Defraud the Department of Veteran's Affairs out of \$13+ Million
- 12) Passing Down Poison: Grandchildren of contaminated Veterans showing birth defects
- 13) Sickened Veterans, families, Congress wait on VA to release findings on Agent Orange exposure
- 14) Tester's Blue Water Navy Veterans Bill Clears Key Hurdle
- 15) The New Forever GI Bill – What It Means For You
- 16) The Only City In California To Solve Veteran Homelessness Is On A Mission To Go Bigger
- 17) VA announces Paul Lawrence as new Under Secretary for Benefits
- 18) VA Announces Whole Health Flagship Sites:

Personalized Plan Puts Veterans in Control of their Health Care

- 19) VA Celebrates 'Nurses Week 2018' with a Number of Activities Recognizing VA's 93,000 Nurses Nationwide
- 20) VA Celebrates National VA Research Week 2018
- 21) VA Expands Telehealth by Allowing Health Care Providers to Treat Patients Across State Lines
- 22) VA Nurse and formerly homeless Veteran: 'For every bad thing you hear that goes on at the VA, there's a thousand great things that go on there that you will never hear about'
- 23) VA researchers have made amazing discoveries
- 24) VA Signs \$10 Billion Health Records Contract with Cerner
- 25) VA Updates Disability Rating Schedule to Better Align with Modern Medicine
- 26) VA Updates Disability Rating Schedule to Better Align with Modern Medicine
- 27) VA whistleblower: Veteran care getting worse as Trump searches for department head
- 28) Veteran: Anti-Malaria Drug Has Lasting Side Effects
- 29) Why did DAV pick Agent Orange Denier Tom Murphy to Win Award Reserved for "Outstanding"

Acts of Veteran Advocacy?

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



VA Disability Claims: Non-Combat Related Conditions Applicable

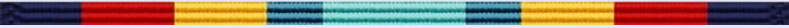
Many veterans often fail to file claims for disability benefits either because they are not aware that they can, or because they don't think their disability would be applicable. Disabilities need not be combat or even work related; they can be the result of playing sports, falling out of your barracks bed, participating in unit PT, or a car accident on while on leave. Any veteran with a current health problem that they believe started on or as a result of their active duty service should consider filing a claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). For those veterans already receiving VA disability benefits for service-connected conditions, be aware that disabilities seldom improve over time; they

normally worsen. If a veteran who is service connected for a disability feels that their disability has gotten worse, they should apply to VA for a reevaluation of their disability level. Veterans who think they might have a disability caused by their service, or who feel that their already service-connected disability has worsened, are strongly encouraged to contact their nearest VA, VSO office, or veterans organization to inquire about the possibility of gaining benefits for a troubling disability.

Most veteran's organizations will be able to fully explain the claims process, and will help complete all the necessary paperwork for submission to VA. For information on disability claims or any other veteran benefits, please don't hesitate to contact the VA at 1-800-827-1000, a veteran-friendly veteran's organization or your local VSO office.



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Compiled from data from many sources, below are the Top 10 Reasons Veterans Don't Pursue Benefits.

1. **I don't trust the Government** -- Many veterans have indicated that they don't trust their Government in matters of confidentiality and privacy, and therefore, have no interest in pursuing benefits. Veterans from the Vietnam era are particularly sensitive regarding their distrust of the Government. Many veterans from that era have indicated that they had a very bad experience while in uniform, and felt as though the Government is not really inclined to assist or help them. One veteran said, "The Government did me wrong while I was in Vietnam , and I am sure they'll do me wrong again."

2. **I didn't know I was eligible** --Far too many veterans are unaware of their eligibility status. Many veterans assume that since they aren't registered to use VA services, they are automatically ineligible for benefits. One veteran said, "I never retired from the military so I always believed I was ineligible for benefits."

3. **I am not eligible** -- Military discharge status

plays in big role in determining if a veteran is potentially eligible for benefits. Honorably discharged veterans are 100% eligible for benefits if they meet the criteria. Veterans with a Bad Conduct Discharge are not eligible for benefits. However, some veterans fall some place between an Honorable Discharge and a Bad Conduct Discharge. For instance, a veteran with a General Discharge is oftentimes eligible for benefits. Best to visit with a Veterans Service Officer to find out if you qualify. One veteran said, “My discharge papers show that I was forced out of the military due to the needs of the Government and my bad foot. I have a General Discharge with medical stipulations. I always thought that made me ineligible for future benefits.”

4. I don't want to go through the “red tape” --

Many veterans are of the belief that pursuing benefits from the VA is a matter of navigating a very complex and confusing system that involves mounds of documentation. While it may be true that there is a lot of paperwork, most, if not all is handled by a competent VSO and not the veteran. The VSO is trained to work with the bureaucracy, not the veteran, and takes much the complexity away from the veteran. One veteran said, “It's just too confusing to get started.”

5. I don't know how -- While there are many veterans service organizations in existence, many veterans do not understand how those organizations can truly help them apply for benefits. Also, many veterans don't know where to begin. One veteran said, "I always thought a VFW was a bar for veterans, and they sit around and swap war stories. I never knew they had staff on board that could help me apply for benefits."

6. I make too much money -- There are many veterans who make over one hundred thousand dollars annually, and are receiving compensation for a service-connected disability. A veterans' disability is independent from their income from other sources, and is not a factor to determine eligibility. There are a few millionaire politicians who are service-connected and receive monthly compensation from a service-Connected disability. One veteran said, "I never applied for benefits because I always believed I made too much money to be eligible for compensation."

7. I was denied after the war -- Sure, many veterans are denied after first applying for benefits, whether a few months after serving in a war zone or years later. Bottom line, sometimes it takes a few

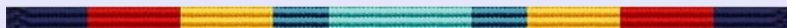
tries to get it right. One veteran said, “I applied for compensation after being diagnosed with PTSD and was quickly denied. I decided it wasn’t worth my time to try again.”

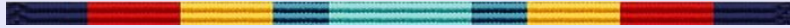
8. Don’t know what to apply for -- Some veterans have many post war ailments and aren’t sure which ones to submit for service-connected compensation, while other veterans appear healthy, except for a few nagging conditions, and aren’t sure if their condition would be considered for compensation. Discussing your issue with a respected and competent VSO is very important. They often know what is potentially eligible for compensation and what is not and most importantly, how to get your benefits package started. One veteran said, “I have so many things wrong with me I don’t know where to start. If I submit claims for all of my conditions the VA will reject them all thinking I am not telling the truth.”

9. I can’t prove my health problems are related to my time in the military -- Finding a good VSO is very important in securing disability compensation for a service-connected condition. The VSO will help you connect the dots. Some VSOs are very innovative in helping veterans find the appropriate proof needed for their claims. While other VSOs have great “inside connections” that may be able to

locate documents needed to show proof for a veteran. One veteran said, “The VA can’t find my medical records so I can’t prove I was injured in Vietnam .”

10. Other veterans are more deserving -- Too many veterans take this stance to keep themselves from attempting to apply for benefits they may be eligible to receive. The forces and influences that kept many soldiers alive by watching each other’s’ back live with them forever. One veteran said, “It took guys in my group one year to convince me that I should apply for compensation. I did, and six months later I was 80%service-connected for PTSD, depression, and diabetes. I never would have put in for benefits if they didn’t talk me into it.”





MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Memorial Day 2018

This Memorial Day, Americans will once again gather in towns, villages, and cities, wherever the flag is raised, to remember our war dead, pay homage to their courage and sacrifice, and honor the selflessness with which they did their duty so that our republic would be preserved.

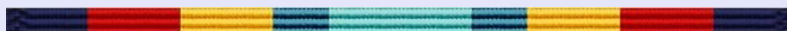
No venue is better suited to such observances than our national cemeteries, where over four million Americans lie in peace. The serene, ordered beauty of these places, so lovingly tended by the men and women of the National Cemetery Administration, bears witness both to the cost of defending this great Nation and to the Nation's undying gratitude toward those who have given their lives in its service.

Over 100,000 Americans are expected to visit our 135 national cemeteries this weekend. Many will do so as a patriotic duty. For many it is a pilgrimage. Millions more will mark the day in less formal ways, prompted by the actions of others to reflect privately on the price of freedom and preciousness of peace.

From the ranks of each will come the next generation of Americans to answer the call of duty. As President Lincoln declared in his Gettysburg Address: “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced ... that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion.”


It is my privilege this year to join America’s 20 million living Veterans and the men and women of the Department of Veterans Affairs in honoring the service and sacrifice of all our fallen. May God continue to bless their memory, your service, and our great and glorious Nation.

Robert L. Wilkie
Acting



U.S. Government Accountability
Office Reports

- 1) CMS Should Take Actions to Continue Prior Authorization Efforts to Reduce Spending
- 2) Federal Procedures to Oversee Protection and Advocacy Programs Could Be Further Improved
- 3) Funding and Performance of Key Preparedness and Capacity-Building Programs



Explaining TRICARE Annual Cost Increases

On Jan. 1, 2018, the Defense Health Agency adjusted TRICARE costs. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2017 set some of these rates. Others were based on unique factors, like the annual cost of living adjustment or average costs of covered health care services.

Read the [full article here](#).



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



New Records System Slows On-Base Rx Process

According to reports, the test roll-out of the new electronic health records system, known as MHS Genesis, has at a minimum tripled wait times for prescriptions. The four test sites included — Madigan Army Medical Center on [Joint Base Lewis-McChord](#), Naval Hospital Bremerton, Fairchild Air Force Base hospital and [Naval Health Clinic Oak Harbor](#) — have all seen pharmacy operations slow dramatically as they struggle to adapt to MHS Genesis. [Read Tom Philpott's latest post](#) in the Military Advantage blog to get the whole story.



- 1) 7K and Poseidon 4500 by Shoreside Enterprises: Voluntary Recall - Due to Presence of Undeclared Sildenafil and/or Tadalafil
- 2) Golden International Corporation Issues Public Safety Warning For Stolen Tilapia Because of Possible Health Risk
- 3) HeartMate 3™ Left Ventricular Assist System:

Class I Recall - Due to Potential Malfunction that may Lead to Graft Occlusion

4) Homeopathic Teething Drops, Nausea Drops, Intestinal Colic Drops, Stomach Calm, Expectorant Cough Syrup, Silver-Zinc Throat Spray, and Argentum Elixir by MBI Distributing: Recall - Due to a Lack of Adequate Controls

5) MBI Distributing, Inc. Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Homeopathic Teething Drops, Nausea Drops, Intestinal Colic Drops, Stomach Calm, Expectorant Cough Syrup, Silver-Zinc Throat Spray, and Argentum Elixir Due to a Lack of Process Controls

6) Melanie Wholesale Inc. Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Peanuts in Melanie Mini Cookies with Caramel Flavor

7) MindFrame Capture LP Revascularization Device by Medtronic: Class I Recall - Due to Wire Material That May Break or Separate During Use

8) New Seasons Market LLC Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Egg in Mini Butter Croissants and Mini Chocolate Croissants

9) Oral Over-the-Counter Benzocaine Products: Drug Safety Communication - Risk of Serious and Potentially Fatal Blood Disorder



Tell Your Senators Support the Military Justice Improvement Act!



The Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) is expected to vote on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) this week (May 21-May 25). The full Senate vote on the NDAA is likely to come after the Memorial Day recess. SWAN expects that the NDAA will include the MJIA amendment and we need to act NOW to ensure it passes! Please stand with military women and all service members to ensure sexual assault perpetrators are held accountable. **Here are five steps you can take:**

1. CONTACT YOUR SENATORS

Tell them why you support the Military Justice Improvement Act. To get more background information on MJIA read SWAN's Position Paper [here](#).

- Find your U.S. Senator [HERE](#).
- You may also phone the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and a switchboard operator will

connect you directly with the Senate office you request.

- Track MJIA (Senate Bill S. 2141) at [Countable](#) and click "Yea" to Take Action.

2. BE PREPARED FOR THE CALL

Here is a sample script for when you reach their office or voicemail:

1. Hi, my name is _____ and I live in _____. I served in the (military branch, if applicable) [OR] I'm calling in support of our troops.

2. I'm asking Senator _____ to support our troops by supporting Sen. Gillibrand's SENATE BILL S. 2141 Military Justice Improvement Act. I'm very concerned about the rising number of sexual assault reports in the military, while the number of prosecutions and convictions decline. Supporting MJIA will ensure that military prosecutors can focus on prosecuting sexual assaults, and military commanders can focus on their unit mission. Our troops, our veterans, and your constituents await your support. Thank you.

3. SHARE YOUR ACTION ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Sample Tweets:

- Have you called your Senator to urge support of MJIA? <https://goo.gl/vPSwk4> #PassMJIA

#EndMilitaryRape #MeToo #MeTooMilitary
@Servicewomen

- @[your Senator's handle] Thank you for supporting our troops and supporting MJIA!

#PassMJIA #EndMilitaryRape #MeToo
#MeTooMilitary @Servicewomen

- Take action to support our troops and #PassMJIA.

Call your Senator now. <https://goo.gl/vPSwk4>.

#EndMilitaryRape #MeToo #MeTooMilitary
@Servicewomen

Sample Facebook Post:

I just called my state Senators and urged them to support the [Military Justice Improvement Act](#). Join me and tell Congress and the military that all service members should serve without fear of sexual assault or harassment, and that true "zero tolerance" means holding perpetrators accountable. #PASSMJIA @Servicewomen

Sample Social Graphic: [See here](#).





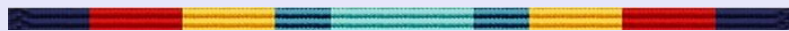
Information on Blue Water Navy Bill H.R. 299

Many of you have asked me questions about the bill, it's contents, progress, and some even asked why it was an issue.



Here is the link to the testimony so you can read for yourself and it should answer most if not all the questions you have.

[BWN Testimony](#)



MIA Update

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced identification and burial updates for 11 American service members who had been missing in action from Korea and WWII. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Army Pfc. Willie E. Blue**, 19, of New Orleans, whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 29 in Dallas. Blue was a member of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. In August 1950, his unit was defending the Naktong Bulge portion of the Pusan Perimeter. Blue was admitted to the 2nd Clearing Station, 2nd Medical Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division in Yong-san, South Korea. After admission, Blue could not be accounted for. When no additional records could be found showing his disposition and the 8076th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital could not provide any information, the Department of the Army declared him deceased on March 3, 1954. [Read about Blue.](#)

-- **Navy Reserve Pharmacist's Mate 2nd Class Thomas J. Murphy**, 22, of Greencastle, Ind., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 28 in Hamilton, Ohio. Murphy was

assigned to Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Fleet Marine Force. On Nov. 20, 1943, Murphy's unit landed on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll against stiff Japanese resistance. Murphy was killed on the first day of the battle, one of approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors killed in the intense fighting. [Read about Murphy.](#)

-- **Marine Corps Pfc. Jack H. Krieger**, 28, of Larned, Kan., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 28 in his hometown. Krieger was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 18th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force. On Nov. 20, 1943, Krieger's unit landed on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll against stiff Japanese resistance. Krieger died on the first day of the battle, one of approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors killed in the intense fighting. [Read about Krieger.](#)

-- **Marine Corps Pfc. Francis E. Drake Jr.**, 20, of Framingham, Mass., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 25 in Springfield, Mass. Drake was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division. On Oct. 9, 1942, Drake's unit participated in the main offensive action in the Battle of

Guadalcanal. Drake was killed during the two-month long battle and buried atop Hill 73 with two other Marines. [Read about Drake.](#)

-- **Navy Radioman 2nd Class Walter H.**

Backman, 22, of Wilton, N.D., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 28 in Batavia, Ill. Backman was stationed aboard the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The battleship sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen. [Read about Backman.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class Edward F. Slapikas**, 26, of Wanamie, Pa., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried June 2 in his hometown. Slapikas was stationed aboard the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The battleship sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen. [Read about Slapikas.](#)

-- **Army Sgt. Eugene W. Yost** was a member of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment,

1st Cavalry Division. In September 1950, his unit participated in a defense of the Pusan Perimeter, a large defensive line west and north of Pusan, South Korea. Yost was reported to have been killed in action on Sept. 3, 1950, but his remains could not be located following the battle. Interment services are pending. [Read about Yost.](#)

-- **Army Sgt. John W. Hall** a member of Headquarters Battery, 503rd Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division. In late November 1950, Hall's unit received orders to move from Kunu-ri to Sunchon, North Korea through an area known as "The Gauntlet." Hall was reported missing in action on Dec. 1, 1950, in the vicinity of Somindong, North Korea. Interment services are pending. [Read about Hall.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. DeMaret M. Kirtley** was a member of Battery A, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 31st Regimental Combat Team, 7th Infantry Division. In late November 1950, his unit was assembled with South Korean soldiers in the 31st Regimental Combat Team on the east side of the Chosin River, North Korea, when his unit was attacked by Chinese forces. Kirtley was among more than 1,000 members of the RCT killed or captured in

enemy territory and was declared missing on Dec. 6, 1950. Interment services are pending. [Read about Kirtley.](#)

-- **Army Sgt. Joseph Akers** was a member of Company C, 803rd Tank Destroyer Battalion, participating in intense fighting in the Hürtgen Forest. On Nov. 25, 1944, his company was deployed as direct-fire support of American infantrymen attacking the town of Grosshau. The M10 tank destroyer Akers occupied was knocked out in the fighting. He was killed during the battle, though his status was initially listed as missing in action. On Dec. 21, 1944, his status was amended to killed in action. Interment services are pending. [Read about Akers.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Carl Nichols** was stationed aboard the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The battleship sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen. Interment services are pending. [Read about Nichols.](#)



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