



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, June 03, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 22



This-N-That

This past week has been slow all across the board. Congress is in recess, the GAO hasn't put out much information.

But there is still a lot of work that needs to be done!

One thing that really needs everyone's help is the Blue Water Navy Bill, H.R. 299.

We need everyone to call their Congressman both in their local and DC offices and ask for their

support when the bill comes to the floor!

I also want to give a special thanks to two people who have been helping with a lot of research being done on Autism and all related illnesses.

Both Regina and Peggy have spent nearly three weeks digging, reading, and downloading documents, articles, and reports, so I want to give these two ladies a high thanks for all your hard work!

The military doesn't always keep records or even statistics on all those who served who have Autism. But anyone else who has first hand experience, or they themselves who have served who are affected by Autism, I would still very much like to hear from you, and all personal references will be redacted when used.

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

An update on our former Director of Operation Mail Call, Betty Hidalgo-Rabuse, she had her second round of chemo last week and it has really drained her badly of all energy, total loss of appetite and she is now down to about 80 pounds.

Betty had decided enough is enough and has decided to go home to be with her husband and her dog, has a hospice nurse who comes daily, so please keep Betty and James in your prayers.

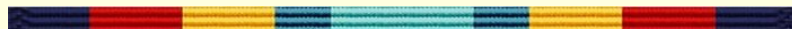
On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org



New VA Mission Act: What It Means for Veterans

Both the Senate and House have passed a new bill, nicknamed the VA Mission Act, to streamline veterans' access to non-VA community care, create a new VA benefit of commercial walk-in clinics, and open up the VA caregiver program, on a phased schedule, to older generations of veterans severely injured while in service. President Trump is expected to sign the VA Mission Act by Memorial Day. For more details, see this [Advantage post](#).



Keep Your DEERS Information Up To Date

Do you or your family member expect to experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE), including planning to move this summer? If so, you'll need to update your information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). To remain eligible for TRICARE coverage, you must keep your information current in DEERS.

Read the full article [here](#).

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 **4,099,530**

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

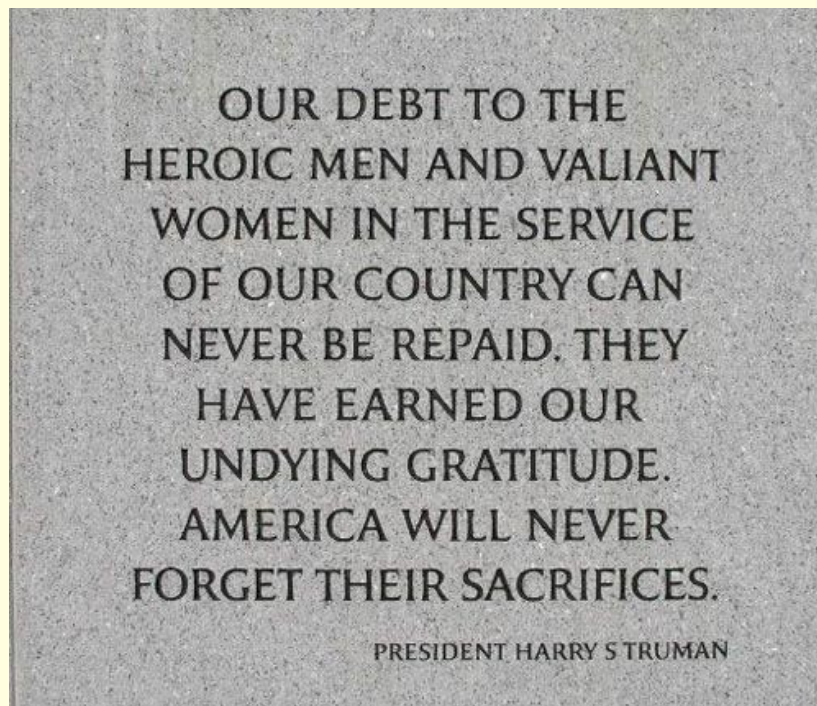
- o Women Veterans Forum
- o WW II Veterans
 - Job Postings
 - Memorial Pages (Updated: 01/11/18)
 - News (Articles On-Line: 7,392)
 - Polls
 - Web Links, more than 3,645, Added 12 New Links (Updated: 04/24/18)

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



Navy Increases Tuition Assistance Limit

The U.S. Navy has announced changes to the Tuition Assistance (TA) program, lifting the fiscal year limit of 16 semester hours (or equivalent) and allowing Sailors to use TA up to the Department of Defense's (DoD) fiscal year funding cap of \$4,500, effective June 1, 2018. TA will continue to be paid up to the current DOD limits of \$250 per semester hour, \$166.67 per quarter hour, or \$16.67 per clock hour. Education counselors at the Navy College Virtual Education Center (NCVEC) and overseas Navy College Offices are available to discuss Sailors' goals and to help maximize their TA benefits. For more details, see this [article](#).



Emergency Prescription Procedures in parts of Maryland

Due to flooding, emergency prescription procedures are in place until June 11, 2018. For more information, visit: <https://go.usa.gov/xQwTY>



LT Bobby Ross

June's Featured Song

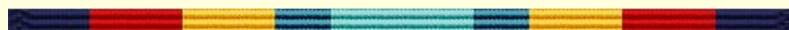
The Fisherman

PATRIOTIC MUSIC

Remember this site is an Internet Adventure. All you need do is click on the pictures and any highlighted word, and you are launched to another world in Cyberspace. Try it! So much fun!



Sam Jone's General Store



**Department of Transportation: Free
Pilot Training for Veterans**

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has a commercial pilot shortage, and it's hoping veterans can make up the difference. The Forces to Flyers program is a three-year research initiative led by DOT and its Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, intended to train up veterans to become commercial pilots. For more information on who is eligible and other specifics, see this [article](#).



Blue Water Bill H.R. 299 Information

Available information concerning HR 299 shows that there is no need to specify sailors who were 'within the Territorial Seas of Vietnam' because the headcount used by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) for costing the legislation includes all sailors who served within the Theater of Combat of Vietnam. The area of the Territorial Seas is just a small portion of the Theater of Combat. < [http://www.oldbluewater.com/three line map.pdf](http://www.oldbluewater.com/three_line_map.pdf) >

The CBO Cost Estimate dated May 15, 2018 for H.R. 299 tells which Vietnam veterans were used to develop the estimated costs of the legislation. They are defined as "about 174,500 service members [who] served offshore during the Vietnam War." The number 174,500 includes all sailors of the Seventh

Fleet who served within the Vietnam Theater of Combat and was taken from periodic DoD OASD (Comptroller) reports by the Directorate for Information Operations and Control. <
http://www.oldbluewater.com/ADA150910_1-3.pdf >

By the title of the Bill and by frequent references within the Bill, the target individuals are also defined as “veterans who served in the territorial seas of Vietnam during the Vietnam War.” Navy veterans who served within the Territorial Seas are only a portion of the total number of veterans that were used in the costing of the H.R. 299. This could cause confusion.

The number 174,500 is shown in the Defense Manpower Data Center report titled “Vietnam Conflict – Casualty Summary” which provides an estimated breakdown of active duty service members from each branch of the Armed Forces who served during the Vietnam War.

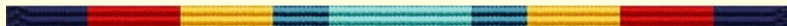
<
https://dcas.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/report_vietnam_sum.xhtml > [As of May 29, 2018.]

The categories for “[Total] Number Serving” are broken down by Branch as well as by ‘location’ and are given for NAVY as:

- Number Serving Worldwide – 1,842,000
 - Number Serving Southeast Asia – 229,000
 - Number Serving South Vietnam – 174,000
- < [www.oldbluewater.com/Congressional Research Service.pdf](http://www.oldbluewater.com/Congressional%20Research%20Service.pdf) >

Aside from 174,500 Navy Personnel (estimated by the CBO to be 500 more than the Data Manpower Data Center number), there are no other naval personnel eligible for presumptive exposure by virtue of service in Vietnam. The 174,500 individuals represent both those who served in the Vietnam Theater of Combat and those within that subset group which served in the Territorial Seas of Vietnam and there are no other naval personnel to consider.

Given these facts, H.R.299 could go to the Committee of the House without mention of the Territorial Sea. This would facilitate much clearer instructions for the VA to implement this legislation.





Thunderbirds Resume Show Season

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds recently resumed their show season as they recover from their first fatal mishap in 36 years. An investigation remains underway into the cause of the mishap, and a report will be made available to the public once complete. For more information, visit the [U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds website](#).

For more Air Force news and information, visit [Military.com](#). For more sports and entertainment-related military events, visit the [Off-duty Center](#).



**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



New Navy Reentry Program Begins

The first set of Golden and Silver Tickets have been issued to 16 Sailors under the new Targeted Reentry Program (TRP). The tickets allow for a streamlined reentry process to the Navy for active duty and Full-Time Support (FTS) Sailors who are leaving the Navy and who decide not to affiliate with the Ready Reserve. To be eligible, Sailors must: (1) be in pay grades O3 through O4 or E4 through E6 with no more than 14 years of service; (2) medically fit for separation and have passed their most recent physical fitness assessment; (3) not in a Failure of Selection status; and (4) have no adverse/criminal/civil convictions. BUPERS-3 is the approving authority for all TRP ticket request.





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



VA Announces New Acting Secretary, Retirement of Deputy Secretary

Today, the White House named Peter O'Rourke as Acting Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. O'Rourke previously served as VA Chief of Staff and prior to that as executive

director of VA's Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection.

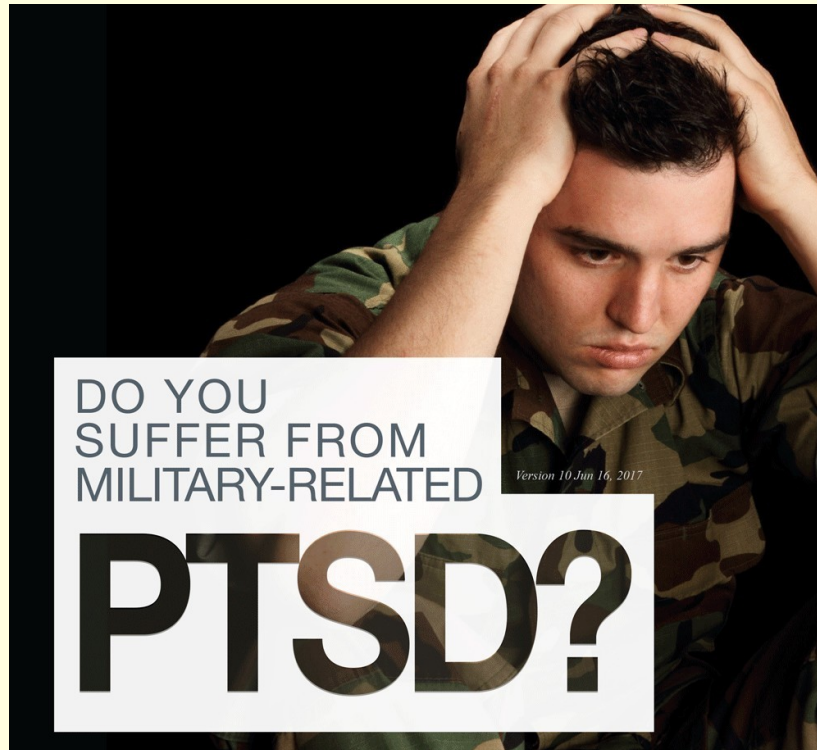
O'Rourke succeeds former Acting Secretary Robert Wilkie, whom the president has selected for nomination as VA Secretary. Wilkie has returned to his prior position at the Department of Defense, where he serves as Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

Jacquelyn Hayes-Byrd will serve as VA Acting Chief of Staff while Mr. O'Rourke serves as Acting Secretary. She previously was VA Deputy Chief of Staff.

In addition, VA Deputy Secretary Thomas G. Bowman is re-entering retirement effective June 15, 2018. VA is thankful for Mr. Bowman's dedication and commitment in serving our Veterans as Deputy Secretary. His contributions over the past year have been instrumental in helping VA achieve its legislative priorities.

Bowman will maintain his longstanding commitment to VA by providing valuable insight and experience as an expert consultant to the Acting Secretary. His VA experience spanned more than a decade, including assignment as Chief of Staff to two

previous VA secretaries. Mr. Bowman looks forward to continuing his service to our nation's Veterans.



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



**TRICARE Supplement for Less than
You Think - Reduce Your Rx Costs
Now**

Get a Tricare supplement that pays your cost shares and can pay 100% of covered excess charges. Get valuable [coverage now](#).



Air Force Wants to Recall Up to 1,000 Retirees

Are you an Air Force retiree who wouldn't mind getting back to active duty? The Air Force has expanded plans for recalling retirees to include not only retired pilots, but also combat system officers and air battle managers. Specifically, the service is encouraging those with 11X, 12X and 13B Air Force Specialty Codes to apply for the Voluntary Retired Return to Active Duty Program. For more details see this [article](#).



Up to \$453k Financing with Your VA Loan Benefit

Don't waste your money on rent when you can buy a home with \$0 down. Now is the time to use your VA loan benefit. Qualified borrowers can buy or refi with as little as \$0 down, and have no PMI payments with great rates and financing up to \$453k. Use your **VA loan benefit** today.





**Thousands of Vets Take Advantage
of AAFES Website**

In the six months since the Army & Air Force Exchange Service officially expanded online shopping privileges to [all honorably discharged veterans](#), more than 50,000 former servicemembers have used the new benefit, saving an average of 20 percent off MSRP and avoiding a total of \$3 million in sales tax so far. Veterans have used their new benefit to order nearly 500,000 items at ShopMyExchange.com — tax-free. Every purchase Veterans make online improves life for servicemembers and their families as 100 percent of Exchange earnings support military Quality-of-Life Programs. To verify eligibility and begin shopping, Veterans can visit [ShopMyExchange.com](#) or [VetVerify.org](#).



Is Gold Star Access Bill Ignoring Some Surviving Families?

Surviving families of deceased military members confront many challenges, and new legislation approved by the House and under consideration by the Senate builds on an [access program rolled out](#) by the [Air Force](#) last year. Currently, surviving spouses who have not remarried and children of troops who died in service have base access. The bill would expand that access to parents, siblings and remarried spouses. But is the use of the words "some fallen troops" in the legislation making things more difficult for some? For more details, see this [article](#).



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



Survey on the Difficulties Military Voters Face

A new survey, funded by the Democracy Project and conducted by the Military Officers Association of America and the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University, will detail challenges service members said they have while casting votes. For more details, see this [post](#).



Links to Other Stories

1. [Agent Orange May Be Responsible For More Veteran Deaths Than The Government Is Willing To Recognize](#)
2. [Are You Eligible For Additional Payment for Asbestos Related Illnesses?](#)
3. ['Dual use' Veterans may be at risk for unsafe opioid use](#)
4. [How Do I Prove Unemployability?](#)
5. [Investigating the use of precision medicine to treat depression](#)
6. [On Special Assignment: Montana Veterans struggle with lasting effects of Agent Orange](#)
7. [Proposing a new framework for clinical trials recruitment](#)
8. [Severe combat injuries could elevate high blood pressure risk in Veterans with PTSD](#)

9. Staying heart-healthy: The importance of phosphorus for Vets with chronic kidney disease
10. The Last Battle of the Vietnam War: Agent Orange and Its 'Presumed Diseases'
11. Three signs of good PTSD care for Veterans
12. VA Disability Benefits – Back to Basics
13. VA turns to foster care for Veterans instead of putting them in nursing homes

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



**TRICARE's Preventive Health
Programs for Women**

TRICARE covers [preventive health care for women](#), including the following screenings: (1) [Breast exams](#): women age 40 or older and women age 30 or older who are at a higher risk of developing breast cancer should have annual breast exams; (2) [pelvic exams](#): all women should begin cervical cancer screenings at age 21; (3) [Pap test](#): Women aged 21-29 should have a Pap test at least every 3 years; and (4) [HPV DNA testing](#): Performed in conjunction with a Pap test for women age 30 and older. Also talk to your health care provider about your emotions, stress, mood, anxiety, sleep patterns or any other mental health concerns. Learn more about well woman examinations covered by TRICARE on the TRICARE [website](#).



[CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER](#)



White House Approves Interagency Plan on Suicide Prevention

President Donald Trump recently approved an interagency plan to implement an executive order offering support to veterans with mental health care and suicide prevention resources for one year during their transition from military to civilian life. VA, DOD, and the Department of Homeland Security were required to develop the plan by an executive order signed by President Trump in January, which directed the agencies to collaborate in efforts to reduce the rate of suicide among recently discharged veterans. Research has shown that veterans are at a higher risk of suicide and mental health crisis during the first year of their transition to civilian life. Learn more about the [Executive Order Supporting Mental Health Care for Transitioning Service Members](#).





DOD Expands Travel Policy for Dignified Transfers at Dover AFB

This week, DOD released supplemental guidance regarding the travel of surviving family members to Dover AFB to attend Dignified Transfer ceremonies. The new guidance expands the authority under which the military departments may provide government-sponsored transportation to surviving family members, and allows the secretary of a military department to authorize the payment for travel and transportation when a service member or DOD civilian dies overseas and the armed forces medical examiner requires that the deceased service member or DOD civilian be brought to Dover Air Force Base for examination.

Government-sponsored transportation was previously limited to survivors of service members who died in a theater of combat operations. The VFW believes this important change in policy will allow DOD to better honor and serve the needs of surviving family members. Read the [expanded policy](#).



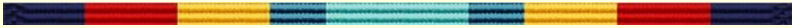
U.S. Government Accountability
Office Reports

1. Medicare Needs Better Information to Reduce the Risk of Harm to Beneficiaries
2. Progress Made Towards Improving Opioid Safety, but Further Efforts to Assess Progress and Reduce Risk Are Needed



Certain Adoption Expenses Reimbursable

VA has amended its regulation to provide reimbursement of qualifying adoption expenses incurred by veterans with a service-connected disability that results in infertility. Covered veterans may request reimbursement for qualifying adoption expenses incurred for adoptions finalized after Sept. 29, 2016. With this rulemaking, funds are authorized to provide reimbursement for qualifying adoption expenses incurred by a covered veteran in the adoption of a child under 18 years of age. More information is [available here](#). VA Form 10152, Reimbursement Request for Qualifying Adoption Expenses, can be [downloaded and printed here](#).

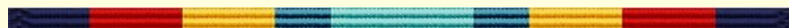


**~We Proudly Support our
Military Personnel & Families~**



GI Bill Comparison Tool

For any service member or veteran looking to pursue their educational goals through the use of the GI Bill, there is an important tool offered by VA. The [GI Bill Comparison Tool](#) allows users to compare different programs and institutions that accept the GI Bill. In the past few years, some student veterans have been impacted by the abrupt closures of the schools they were attending. These schools were using predatory business practices and had numerous complaints against them. The GI Bill Comparison Tool gives users the ability to check on the schools they wish to attend, and provides up-to-date data received from current and past students, helping GI Bill users make better, more informed decisions about where to attend school, and hopefully avoid programs that offer little to no value. For help choosing a school, [click here](#).





1. Allergan Issues Nationwide Voluntary Recall of TAYTULLA® Softgel Capsules 1mg/20mcg Sample Packs Due to Out of Sequence Capsules
2. Apotex Corp. Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Fluticasone Propionate Nasal Spray USP 50 mcg Per Spray 120 Metered Sprays Due to Potential for Small Glass Particles
3. Divvies, LLC Conducts Voluntary Recall of Benjamint Crunch Chocolate Bars Due to Undeclared Milk In The Mint
4. Dough-To-Go Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Tree Nuts in Zoe's Vegan Tuxedo Fudge Cookie
5. Fluticasone Propionate Nasal Spray by Apotex Corp: Recall - Due to Potential for Small Glass Particles
6. Global Commodities Inc. Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Sulfites In Apricot with Pitt Watan Brand
7. H-E-B Voluntarily Issues a Precautionary Recall H-E-B Ode to Olives Sliced Salad Olives Being Recalled for Potential Glass in The Product
8. H-E-B Voluntarily Issues Recall Specific flavors and container sizes of EconoMax and Hill Country Fare ice creams and Creamy Creations sherbets recalled for broken metal in processing equipment

9. Shadow Holdings, LLC Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of X-Jow and Acne Shave products due to Possible Bacterial Contamination
10. STAT-Check and Medline Manual Resuscitator Bags by SunMed Holdings: Recall - Patient Port May Detach During Use
11. SunMed Holdings, LLC Issues a Nationwide Recall of STAT-Check and Medline Manual Resuscitator Bags
12. TAYTULLA (norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol capsules and ferrous fumarate capsules) by Allergan: Recall - Due to Out of Sequence Capsules
13. X-Jow and Acne Shave Products by Shadow Holdings: Voluntary Recall - Due to Possible Bacterial Contamination



D-Day Commemoration

On Wednesday, June 6 at 11 a.m., the Friends of the National World War II Memorial will host a ceremony at the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C., to recognize the service of the some 160,000 Allied troops that landed on the beaches of France 74 years ago. In attendance will be approximately 10 D-Day and WWII veterans who will place wreaths to honor the sacrifice of the 9,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who were killed during the invasion. Find more information about the ceremony [here](#).



H.R. 936, the Special Priority on Aircrafts and Coverage Equity Act of 2017

Representative Gus Bilirakis (FL) introduced H.R. 936, a bill that would permit veterans who have service-connected, total and permanent disabilities to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the armed

forces are entitled to such travel.

This bill would afford priority to totally disabled veterans for transportation on scheduled and unscheduled military flights within the continental United States and on scheduled overseas flights operated by the Air Mobility Command, on a space-available basis. This measure is in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 223, which seeks the enactment of legislation to extend space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to all service-connected veterans entitled to receive compensation at the 100-percent rate.

Please use the prepared e-mail or draft your own message to request that your Representative cosponsor this important bill and ask that the measure be brought to the floor for a vote and passed as soon as possible.

Thank you for all you do for ill and injured veterans and their families.

[Take Action](#)





MIA Update

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

-- **Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Marvin B. Adkins**

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 Adkins.](#)



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