The American Legion

OFFICE OF THE
NATIONAL COMMANDER

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February 12, 2014

Honorable John Boozman
United States Senate
SH-320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boozman:

On behalf of the 2.4 million members of The American Legion, I would like to express our support for your proposed amendment addressing advanced appropriations to S. 1982. For such a critical piece of veterans' legislation, it is important to get the details right for veterans. Although S. 1982 in its non-amended form expands advanced appropriations to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) mandatory spending accounts, it falls short of needed expansions to the discretionary accounts. Your legislation would help ensure these accounts receive the same protections.

Advanced appropriations are vital to VA long range planning, and the ability to operate efficiently and provide service to veterans without interuption. While medical accounts are currently protected, and VA has spoken glowingly about how advanced appropriations improved their abilities for long range planning, critical discretionary accounts such as disability claims processing, Information Technology infrastructure, and construction planning are not covered unless Congress acts. As the VA system struggles to meet the 21st century needs of veterans, these are vital components of VA service that cannot be left behind.

The American Legion adopted Resolution No. 77, *Advance Appropriations for All of the Department of Veterans Affairs' Discretionary Accounts,* during the 2013 National Convention in Houston, Texas to reinforce the strong commitment to advocacy for applying this provision to ALL accounts in VA.

The American Legion supports your amendment, and applauds your leadership in addressing this critical issue facing our nation's service members and veterans.

Respectfully,

DANIEL M. DELLINGER
National Commander