AMERICAN LEGION

LEGISLATIVE WEEKLY

July 11, 2025

WEEKLY GRASSROOTS NEWSLETTER

This week, we are asking Legionnaires to contact Congress to request support for *the Service Dogs Assisting Veterans (SAVES) Act!* This bill proposes a five-year pilot program for the VA to award grants to nonprofit organizations to provide trained service dogs to eligible veterans, cover the cost of training, and provide life-long veterinary insurance. *The American Legion supports this legislation, and we appreciate all the emails you have sent so far.*

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Wisconsin	**477**
Kansas	**473**
Florida	**426**
New York	**362**
Tennessee	**308**

TOP GRASSROOTS DEPARTMENTS MAY-JUNE

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VA TO REDUCE STAFF BY NEARLY 30K BY END OF FY2025

(Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call)

This article's original publication can be found here

The reduction – achieved through normal attrition, early retirements, deferred resignations and the federal hiring freeze – eliminates need for a large-scale reduction in force

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs today announced it's on pace to reduce total VA staff by nearly 30,000 employees by the end of fiscal year 2025, eliminating the need for a large-scale reduction-in-force.

While VA had been considering a department-wide RIF to reduce staff levels by up to 15%, employee reductions through the federal hiring freeze, deferred resignations, retirements and normal attrition have eliminated the need for that RIF. The numbers break down as follows:

- VA had roughly 484,000 employees on Jan. 1, 2025, and 467,000 employees as of June 1, 2025 — a reduction of nearly 17,000.
- Between now and Sept. 30, the department expects nearly 12,000 additional VA employees to exit through normal attrition, voluntary early retirement authority) or the deferred resignation program.

VA has multiple safeguards in place to ensure these staff reductions do not impact Veteran care or benefits. All VA mission-critical positions are exempt from the DRP and VERA, and more than 350,000 positions are exempt from the federal hiring freeze.

Meanwhile, VA performance continues to improve. Under President Trump and Secretary Collins:

- VA's disability claims backlog is already down nearly 30%, after it increased 24% during the Biden Administration.
- VA is processing record numbers of disability claims, reaching 1 million claims processed for FY25 on Feb. 20 and reaching 2 million claims by June — both achievements were done in record time.
- VA has implemented major reforms to make it easier for survivors to get benefits, after serious problems during the Biden Administration.
- VA is accelerating the deployment of its integrated electronic health record system, after the program was nearly dormant for almost two years under the Biden Administration.
- VA is phasing out treatment for gender dysphoria. Frankly, this commonsense reform should have been done years ago, but only President Trump and Secretary Collins had the courage to do it.
- VA ended DEI at the department, reversing the divisive Biden-era policies and stopping more than $14 million in DEI spending.
- VA has brought more than 60,000 VA employees back to the office, where we can work better as a team to serve Veterans.

"Since March, we've been conducting a holistic review of the department centered on reducing bureaucracy and improving services to Veterans," said **VA Secretary Doug Collins**. "As a result of our efforts, VA is headed in the right direction — both in terms of staff levels and customer service. A department-wide RIF is off the table, but that doesn't mean we're done improving VA. Our review has resulted in a host of new ideas for better serving Veterans that we will continue to pursue."

VA is currently exploring a number of additional reforms to improve operational efficiency and service to Veterans, including:

- Today, the Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration and National Cemetery Administration all run duplicative and costly administrative functions that can be centralized or restructured so they can each focus on their core missions of health care, benefits and burial services, respectively.
    - To that end, VA is reviewing the centralization of support functions to streamline operations and improve support to Veterans, including areas such as police, procurement, construction, IT, budgeting and others.

- VA operates 274 separate call centers that are not connected to one another. A centralized call center with modernized systems would lead to quicker and better service for Veterans and could be run with fewer staff members.
- VA has a proven payroll system that processes paychecks for more than 200,000 VA employees, but some 50 VAMCs still process their own payroll. VA is already working to consolidate payroll for all employees under the VA Time and Attendance System, which will save time, money and resources.

SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE APPROVES FISCAL 2026 NDAA

July 10, 2025 – 3:47 p.m. By John M. Donnelly, CQ

The Senate Armed Services Committee approved a fiscal 2026 defense authorization bill late Wednesday night, and senators plan to disclose its contents on Friday, according to aides.

Earlier this week, each of the panel's seven subcommittees approved their portions of the massive defense policy bill. Still to be disclosed is the committee's vote tally in approving the bill.

Also still to be divulged is how much spending the bill would authorize — both in total and for the plethora of individual programs under the committee's jurisdiction, most of which are at the Pentagon but also at a few other federal agencies.

These authorizations include pay raises, weapons procurements, troop strength levels, military construction projects, nuclear weapons initiatives and much more. Senators and staff were tight-lipped on Thursday when asked for details about the sweeping national defense authorization, or NDAA, measure.

"We are very focused on the Armed Services Committee: None of us say anything about the bill until the committee releases the bill and a summary," said Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va.

The committee, chaired by Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., is a bastion of defense hawks. Last year the panel approved a fiscal 2025 NDAA that was $25.1 billion above the level requested by President Joe Biden. But the fiscal 2025 NDAA that became law (PL118-159) authorized essentially the amount of defense spending that Biden had requested.

Fiscal 2025 defense appropriations bills, which contain the funds themselves, exceeded the Biden request by about $8.4 billion in emergency funds, according to the Congressional Research Service.

House action teed up

The House Armed Services Committee, meanwhile, tentatively plans to hold this year's version of its annual marathon NDAA markup next week. According to a draft version of the so-called chairman's mark of the bill that the House panel will consider, its topline for fiscal 2026 is $882.6 billion, reflecting the amount for defense under the committee's jurisdiction that President Donald Trump requested.

Of that amount, $848.3 billion would go to the Pentagon, according to the draft document. On top of all that proposed authorization of funds in fiscal 2026 is $119.3 billion in appropriations for defense contained in the reconciliation bill (PL 119-21) that was enacted July 4. The $119.3 billion is the fiscal 2026 subset of about $156 billion for defense over 10 years in the reconciliation bill.

When the requested NDAA amounts and the reconciliation figures are added up, national security programs would net more than $1.01 trillion in fiscal 2026, according to the White House. It remains to be seen whether the Senate NDAA would add authorization to spend still more money than that.

LEGIONNAIRE OF THE WEEK

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Craig Barnes, Arizona

Craig, thank you for your steadfast advocacy of Legion priorities; we are honored to name you Legionnaire of the Week!

Craig met with **Congressman Andy Biggs** at ALA High School in Arizona. They discussed developing a veteran's center that would be located in Queen Creek to help veterans and first responders in the area.

Thank you, Craig, for your report and the time you have dedicated to the Legion's legislative priorities.

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UPCOMING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

As of 7/10, the following hearings are scheduled:

- Monday, July 14, 3:00 PM: House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Technology Modernization Oversight Hearing -- "*VA Office of Information and Technology Organizational Structure and Priorities"*
- Tuesday, July 15, 2:15 PM: House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Helth Oversight Hearing -- "*Right Time, Right Place, Right Treatment with VA Community Care"*
- Wednesday, July 16, 2:30 PM: House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Oversight Hearing -- "*Path of Purpose: Restoring the VA VR&E Program to Effectively Serve Veterans"*
- Wednesday, July 16, 4:00 PM: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs Hearing -- "*Hearing to Consider Pending Nominations"*

HVAC hearings can be viewed at: Calendar Home | House Committee on Veterans Affairs

SVAC hearings can be viewed at: Hearings - U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
HASC hearings can be viewed at: Hearings – House Armed Services Committee
SASC hearings can be viewed at: Hearings – U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services

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July 18, 2025

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SENATE PANEL BACKS PLANS FOR $456 BILLION VA BUDGET NEXT YEAR

This article's original publication can be found here

Senate appropriators on Thursday advanced plans for a $456 billion budget for Veterans Affairs programs and benefits next fiscal year, putting it generally in line with House and White House goals for future department spending.

Unlike the House draft adopted last month, however, the Senate VA appropriations plan advanced out of committee with broad bipartisan support and without a bevy of controversial social issue amendments.

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, praised the bill's passage as an important step forward for the federal budget process and for supporting America's veterans.

"It helps to fund the VA Health Care System, makes investments to improve mental health care, includes programs to assist in the prevention of veteran suicide, homelessness prevention programs, supports our family caregivers and expands care for our rural veterans," she said. "It also funds important veterans benefits, including disabilities, pensions, the GI Bill and employment training programs."

House lawmakers' budget plan for the department totaled about $453 billion, but both the House and Senate drafts call for roughly $134 billion in discretionary funding, money for new program starts and initiatives.

That total is slightly less than what White House officials asked for in their budget proposal, but only by about $1 billion.

Most of the debate in Thursday's Senate Committee markup focused not on the VA spending plans but instead the controversial rescissions package adopted by the chamber the night before. That measure would pull back about $9 billion in congressionally authorized spending, including money for foreign aid and public media programs.

But those objections were not enough to deter most Democrats from backing the Republican-led VA budget plan.

The Senate proposal includes language ensuring that veterans "are never denied care or timely access to care as a result of the damaging or arbitrary cuts to the VA workforce," a reference to recent workforce reductions at the department.

Last week, VA officials backtracked on earlier plans to trim up to 80,000 employees from the department's payroll, instead projecting a reduction of about 30,000 individuals by the end of September.

Veterans Affairs leaders have seen regular budget increases annually for more than 20 years, even amid frequent congressional and White House efforts to reduce federal spending.

In fiscal 2001, the VA budget — both mandatory and discretionary — totaled just $45 billion. In 2011, it was about $125 billion. In fiscal 2023, the total topped $300 billion for the first time. The House-passed plan for fiscal 2026 would now push that total over the $400 billion level, and cost more than the combined fiscal 2025 budgets of the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps.

Senate officials have not said when the budget plan could come before the full chamber for a vote, but Collins said Republican leaders have committed to acting on the issue in coming months.

NEW VA PROGRAM FOR VETERANS FACING FORECLOSURE CLEARS LAST HURDLE IN CONGRESS

This article's original publication can be found here

Legislation that creates a safety net for thousands of veterans facing foreclosure with delinquent home mortgages now moves to the president's desk for his signature after passing the Senate.

The VA Home Loan Program Reform Act, which was adopted by the Senate with a voice vote late Tuesday, establishes a partial claim program that allows veterans who are behind on home loan payments to receive federal assistance.

A companion bill in the House was adopted by voice vote in May.

The bill authorizes the VA to purchase a portion of the debt on veterans loans in default or at imminent risk of default, according to the legislation.

The mortgage industry estimates more than 20,000 current borrowers are considered seriously delinquent and a partial claim program at the VA could help them retain their homes, lawmakers said. The goal is to help veterans catch up on payments and prevent foreclosure, they said.

“First, the bill authorizes the VA to pay the holder of a loan guaranteed by the VA an amount necessary to avoid the foreclosure of the loan, provided that the holder of the loan and the veteran obligated on the loan execute documents to ensure the VA obtains a secured interest in the property covered by the loan,” according to the bill.

Leaders from the House and Senate Veterans’ Affairs committees released a joint statement after the Senate passed the bill.

“This bipartisan and bicameral legislation will assist veterans who are facing financial hardships and provide VA with a tool to better help veterans stay in their homes and avoid foreclosure. The VA Home Loan Program provides one of the best benefits VA has to offer and has helped veterans and their families build home equity since its inception in 1944,” according to the joint statement.

The VA home loan program was created under The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, which became known as the GI Bill. More than 3.7 million veterans hold active home loans guaranteed by the VA, according to the agency.

Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., chairman of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, and Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., the committee’s top Democrat, offered the formal remarks after Senate adoption.

On the House side, Rep. Mike Bost, R-Ill., chairman of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, and Rep. Mark Takano of California, the top Democrat on the committee, included their names on the statement.

“This legislation will ensure these veterans have a viable solution to avoid defaulting on their loans, bring their mortgages current, and avoid foreclosure by establishing a replacement partial claims program,” the lawmakers said.

The partial claims program replaces the Veterans Affairs Servicing Program, which was described as a “last-resort option” for delinquent borrowers to lower their mortgage rate and make their monthly payments more affordable.

Under that program, the VA bought the mortgage from the servicer.

But the program permanently closed May 1, after Republican lawmakers complained the VA should not be in the business of buying home mortgages. They argued some veterans might intentionally fall behind on their payments to get a lower mortgage rate from the VA.

“My focus is to ensure that veterans remain in their homes whenever possible,” said Rep. Derrick Van Orden, R-Wis. “But I am concerned that this program could evolve into a financial burden of billions of dollars in bailouts that fall on the shoulders of taxpayers.”

Van Orden introduced the VA Home Loan Program Reform Act in the House for a partial claim program to allow veterans to catch up with their overdue mortgage payments while keeping the original loan.

Under the partial claim program, veterans facing financial hardship can defer missed payments without immediately facing foreclosure, Van Orden said.

The VA Home Loan Program Reform Act received support from lenders and other stakeholders, including the Mortgage Bankers Association, the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion.

“We encourage the VA and mortgage servicers to continue their collaboration as this program is implemented, ensuring that they help mitigate any impact on veterans facing financial hardship while VA takes the necessary steps to establish the new partial claims program properly,” lawmakers said in the joint statement.

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Joseph Marcheggiani, Florida

Joseph, thank you for your steadfast advocacy of Legion priorities; we are honored to name you Legionnaire of the Week!

Joseph met with Congressman Darren Soto at Makinson-Carson Post 10 in Kissimmee. They discussed local veteran needs and the Legislative Agenda. Additionally, the Congressman's aide became a Legionnaire that day, and the Congressman became a member of the Sons of the American Legion!

Thank you, Joseph, for your report and the time you have dedicated to the Legion's legislative priorities.

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- Wednesday, July 23, 10:00 AM: House Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee Hearing -- "*Reforming Defense Acquisition to Deliver Capability at the Speed of Relevance*"
- Wednesday, July 23, 4:00 PM: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs – *Hearing to Consider Pending Nominations*
- Thursday, July 24, 9:30 AM: Senate Committee on Armed Services Nomination Hearing -- "*To consider the nomination of Admiral Daryl L. Caudle, USN for reappointment to the grade of admiral and to be Chief of Naval Operations*"

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BILLS THAT PASSED THE HOUSE

The following bills passed in the House this week:

- S. 423: PRO Veterans Act of 2025
- S. 201: ACES Act of 2025
- H.R. 2625: VERY Act of 2025
- H.R. 2170: To name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Toms River, New Jersey, the Leonard G. 'Bud' Lomell, VA Clinic, and for other purposes.
- H.R. 4275: Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025

PROPOSAL TO EXPAND PRIVATE HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS ADVANCED BY HOUSE PANEL

This article's original publication can be found here

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman, Mike Bost, questions Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough, during a hearing on whether the Veterans Affairs ignore and perpetrate sexual harassment, on Capitol Hill, Feb. 14, 2024, in Washington. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

A bill aimed at giving veterans easier access to private doctors using Department of Veterans Affairs funding has advanced out of a key House panel after stark partisan debate.

Cost issues scuttled a couple of controversial provisions from the GOP-led bill advanced Wednesday compared to the version of the bill that was introduced earlier this year. But the legislation still stoked strong opposition from Democrats accusing Republicans of trying to privatize the VA as Republicans insisted they are trying to give veterans more options in their care.

"Veterans don't need their hands held," said House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost, R-Ill., who sponsored the bill. "It's their health care."

The bill, which Bost introduced in January with Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran, R-Kan., would solidify the VA's existing standards to qualify for community care, the name of the program that allows veterans to seek VA-funded care from private health care providers.

It would also make it easier for veterans to qualify for private care by saying that the availability of telehealth cannot be a factor in calculating wait times and by stipulating wait times cannot reset if the VA cancels an appointment or veterans do not show up to their appointment. And it would create a pilot program for veterans to get private outpatient care for mental health and substance abuse issues whenever they want.

The measure builds on a legislative achievement President Donald Trump frequently touts about his first term: the Mission Act, which overhauled how the department offers private-sector care to veterans.

While the Mission Act was bipartisan when it passed in 2018, it has since become a partisan lightning rod. Republicans accused the Biden administration of undermining the law and blocking eligible veterans from being able to access community care, while Democrats maintained that private care costs are growing unsustainably.

The community care budget has grown exponentially since the passage of the Mission Act and a predecessor law from 2014 called the Choice Act. In 2014, the Veterans Health Administration spent about $7.9 billion, or about 12% of its overall budget, on private care, compared to about $17.6 billion, or about 20% of the budget, in 2021, according to a Congressional Budget Office report from 2021. For 2026, congressional Republicans are on track to approve $34 billion for community care.

Under regulations issued after the Mission Act, veterans can go to private doctors if they face a wait time for VA doctors of more than 20 days for a primary or mental health care appointment or face a drive of 30 minutes or longer. For specialty care, the standards are a 60-minute drive or 28-day wait.

Those exact standards aren't a legal requirement. So Bost and Moran's bill, dubbed the Veterans' Assuring Critical Care Expansions to Support Servicemembers Act, or the ACCESS Act, would enshrine that criteria into law.

When it was first introduced in January, the ACCESS Act also included a requirement for the VA to take into account a veteran's preference for where they get treatment when making a referral to private health care. And it would have expanded eligibility for veterans to seek care at private residential mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities.

Both of those elements were taken out of the bill advanced by the House Veterans Affairs Committee on Wednesday. Republicans still support the ideas, but haven't found a way to pay for them yet, Bost said.

While Democrats on Wednesday recognized the removal of what they described as "harmful" sections of the bill, they took issue with other provisions they argued advance a GOP goal of privatizing the VA.

Specifically, Democrats targeted the language to disregard the availability of telehealth from eligibility for community care and the pilot program to expand access to private mental health care.

The three-year pilot program would allow veterans to get private outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment without a referral or pre-authorization. The pilot would be available in at least five locations.

"Leaving veterans untethered in the community with no way for VA providers to know how a veteran is doing and whether they are continuing care or treatment is harmful to the veteran. Requiring referrals keeps that connection, that relationship, in place, and it can be live-saving," said Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., the ranking member of the committee. "This provision will also lead to a dramatic increase in spending on private-sector care, diminishing the availability of resources for investments in VA's direct care system."

At Wednesday's committee meeting, Republicans voted down several Democratic amendments, including ones to strike the pilot program and the language on telehealth.

The bill as a whole was approved by the committee in a 12-11 party line vote. The vote advanced the bill for consideration by the full House, which is leaving for a five-week summer break after Wednesday.

BLUMENTHAL, CRAPO & WARREN FILE MAJOR RICHARD STAR ACT AS AMENDMENT TO MUST-PASS DEFENSE BILL

This article's original publication can be found here

Bipartisan amendment to the NDAA would deliver combat-injured veterans their full earned disability compensation and retirement pay.

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), U.S. Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID), and U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) today announced they are filing the ***Major Richard Star Act*** as an **amendment** to the annual must-pass defense bill, the *National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).* The Senate is expected to begin consideration of the NDAA next week.

Currently, only veterans with disability ratings above 50 percent and more than 20 years of service are eligible to receive the full amount of their Department of Defense (DOD) retirement and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability payments—leaving behind more than 50,000 combat-injured military retirees. If adopted, the Senators' Major Richard Star Act will fix this unjust policy for medical retirees with a combat-related disability—providing them their full VA disability and DOD retirement payments.

"The Major Richard Star Act would correct one of the deepest injustices in our present veterans' disability system. As an amendment to the NDAA, it would enable tens of thousands of combat-injured veterans to collect the full benefits they've earned," said Ranking Member Blumenthal. "Right now they're denied fair, complete compensation because they are subject to a dollar-for-dollar offset of their VA disability and military retirement benefits. It's unacceptable—and I'm joining my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to right this wrong by seeking to attach our legislation to this year's NDAA. With more than 31 cosponsors, adopting our amendment is a commonsense next step to finally provide these military retirees who already sacrificed so much the benefits they need and earned."

"The Major Richard Star Act corrects a severe injustice for combat-wounded veterans," said Senator Crapo. "The support for this correction is clear. Though the namesake of our legislation is no longer with us, we must pass this fix on behalf of the more than 50,000 veterans, including hundreds in Idaho, who stand to benefit."

"Our veterans put their lives on the line for this country and it's time our government gives them the full benefits they've earned," said Senator Warren. "Including this bill in the NDAA will ensure the federal government keeps its promise to our veterans."

This bipartisan legislation is named in honor of Major Richard A. Star, a decorated war veteran who was forced to medically retire due to his combat-related injuries. Major Star sadly lost his battle with cancer on February 13, 2021.

The Senators' legislation has 76 bipartisan cosponsors, and is supported by the following military, veterans, and survivor organizations: Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA), Air & Space Forces Association (AFA), American GI Forum, **The American Legion**, American Logistics Association, American Military Society, American Veterans (AMVETS), America's Warrior Partnership, American WWII Orphans Network, Armed Forces Retiree Association, Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA), Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS), Association of the United States Army (AUSA), Association of the United States Navy (AUSN), Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), Blue Star Families, Burn Pits 360, Catholic War Veterans of the USA & Auxiliary, Chief Warrant Officers Association of the US Coast Guard (CWOA), Code of Support Foundation, Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Dixon Center for Military and Veterans Services, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, Fleet Reserve Association (FRA), Gold Star Spouses of America, Grunt Style Foundation, Gold Star Wives of America (GSW), Healing Household, Heroes Athletic Association, Hire Heroes USA, HunterSeven Foundation, Japanese American Veterans Association, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV), K9s for Warriors, Marine Corps League (MCL), Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA), Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America (MCA), Military Family Advisory Network, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), Military Order of the World Wars, Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), Mission Roll Call, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA), National Defense Committee, National Guard Association of the United States, National Military Family Association (NMFA), Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA), Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA), Operation First Response, Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Project Sanctuary, The Ranger Leadership and Policy Center, Quality of Life Foundation, Reserve Organization of America (ROA), Sea Service Family Foundation, Stronghold Freedom Foundation, Student Veterans of America, TBI Warrior Foundation, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA), The Independence Fund (TIF), United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA), USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA), United Through Reading, VetsFirst/United Spinal Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Wounded Paw Project, Wounded Warrior Project (WWP).

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by meeting with/contacting their Congressional Representative/Senator to advocate for veterans. Efforts like these truly make a difference and give veterans a voice in Congress.

Rafael Munoz-Citron, Washington

Rafael, thank you for your steadfast advocacy of Legion priorities; we are honored to name you Legionnaire of the Week!

Over the past few months, Rafael has been corresponding with Representative Adam Smith's office and Legislative Assistants. After numerous meetings and follow-up messages, Congressman smith agreed to become a co-sponsor for H.R. 2605: SAVES Act! Since he is Ranking Member of the House Committee on Armed Services, his co-sponsorship should encourage others to not only co-sponsor the legislation but also to facilitate securing its passage.

Thank you, Rafael, for your report and the time you have dedicated to the Legion's legislative priorities.

GRASSROOTS INFORMATION

Interested in what the Legion is advocating for in Congress? Check out our information papers and Legislative priorities. This is a great starting point for a conversation with your elected officials!

As part of our ongoing Grassroots efforts, LegDiv staff is available to provide **Grassroots Training** tailored to the hosting Department's needs. If you are interested in hosting a Grassroots training event, please contact grassroots@legion.org or ejohnson@legion.org.

You can find relevant legislation and the Legion's stance on them in the key legislation section of VoterVoice.

Register for Action Alerts today at
https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register

UPCOMING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

As of 7/24, there are no hearings scheduled. Congress will be in recess until September 2.

HVAC hearings can be viewed at: Calendar Home | House Committee on Veterans Affairs

SVAC hearings can be viewed at: Hearings - U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
HASC hearings can be viewed at: Hearings – House Armed Services Committee
SASC hearings can be viewed at: Hearings – U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services

View The American Legion Legislative Handbook Here