

Support today's veterans & military

Help us ensure that an adequate VA system will be there for the millions of current and future veterans.

When you visit your congressional representatives, please stress that these are the issues we will be fighting for in the 113th Congress. These goals reflect the resolutions passed and supported by the men and women of the VFW and our Auxiliaries. To find out who your congressional representatives are, visit the VFW website at www.vfw.org and click on the "VFW in DC" Action Corps link.

Play a role in the process

Ensure that these Priority Goals are enacted. Sign up today for the VFW's legislative e-newsletter at www.vfw.org/weekly and follow the Capitol Hill blog at www.thefvw.blogspot.com



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■ 2014 ■
Priority Goals

**Key VFW National Veterans,
Legislative, Employment
and Security Goals.**



Budget

- Provide sufficient, timely and predictable funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Pass full Advance Appropriations for VA to ensure future budget battles have no impact on the delivery of care and services to veterans.
- Find a workable solution to budget sequestration to guarantee VA total exemption and to ensure defense funding supports Quality of Life programs for service members and families, training and readiness, troop end strength and equipment needs.

VA Health Care

- Improve access to VA care and reduce wait times – especially for specialty care – by fully implementing an updated appointment-making policy.
- Expand the use of connected health services like telehealth and MyHealthVet, to provide rural veterans with well-coordinated care options.
- Urge Congress to provide oversight of VA mental health care to determine whether more providers are needed, and that the care being provided is well-coordinated and effective.
- Continue to improve gender-specific services for women veterans, to include appropriate counseling and care for those who were victims of military sexual trauma.
- Authorize VA to receive reimbursement for care provided to Medicare eligible veterans.
- Address the national crisis of suicide among service members and veterans by ensuring proper funding for DOD and VA suicide and crisis awareness programs.
- Strengthen mental health, employment counseling, substance abuse, and peer support programs to provide effective treatments for those at risk of suicide and homelessness among veterans.

VA Compensation & Benefits

- Oversee the measures being implemented to reduce VBA's total benefit claims backlog while improving the overall quality and timeliness of ratings decisions.
- Enhance training to improve the skills and knowledge of VA employees.

- Ensure claims processors meet and exceed accountability and accuracy standards.

Transition Assistance

- Demand the creation and implementation of one integrated electronic medical and service record that is easily accessible for veterans, the military and VA.
- Ensure the military's ongoing implementation of its newest Transition Assistance Program offers quality information for all transitioning service members, and that all relevant government agencies and veterans' service organizations continue to serve as partners in the transition process.
- Promote the use of secure and uniform online portals, like eBenefits, that veterans can apply for to access critical benefits and services, as well as pertinent military and VA records.
- Require Congress to provide proper oversight of agencies that administer grant per diem funding and ensure permanent housing solutions are available for all homeless veterans – especially veterans with children.

Education & Employment

- Ensure that military-trained professionals receive the proper licenses, credentials or academic credit to allow them to transition into similar civilian careers after military service.
- Protect the integrity of earned educational benefits like the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Military Tuition Assistance.
- Ensure veterans have access to a quality, cost-effective education and that veterans are well informed of all post-service educational options.
- Work to improve federal programs designed to help veterans find and retain quality post-military careers.
- Hold the federal government accountable for its obligation to hire veterans and do business with veteran entrepreneurs.

Defense/Homeland Security

- Fully support U.S. troops and their mission to prosecute the war on terrorism, as well as to protect our nation's citizens and interests around the world.

- Halt the development and/or proliferation of weapons of mass destruction while continuing to develop and deploy a ballistic missile defense system to protect the U.S. and our allies.
- Secure America's borders from all threats, foreign and domestic, and identify and deport illegal aliens who commit crimes.

Military Quality of Life

- Oppose all proposals to change the current military retirement program or increase TRICARE enrollment fees and copayments on military retirees and military families.
- Protect Quality of Life programs for active duty and Reserve Component service members and their families.
- Support full concurrent receipt of military retirement pay and VA disability compensation without offset, and regardless of the rating percentage.
- Support efforts to lower the Reserve Component retirement pay age to 55, and to correct the FY 2008 NDAA retirement pay provision to retroactively grant early retirement credit to all Reserve Component members who were activated in support of contingency operations from 9/11 forward.
- Provide the DD Form 214 to all Reserve Component members who separate or retire under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Eliminate the SBP/DIC offset.

POW/MIA

- Achieve the fullest possible accounting of U.S. military personnel missing from all wars.
- Ensure the U.S. government keeps the POW/MIA issue elevated as a national priority.
- Urge the President and Congress to fully fund all organizations involved in the Full Accounting Mission, and to protect the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command budget from being redirected by U.S. Pacific Command or reduced by the Department of Defense, and fully support the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs.