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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 112th Congress. These goals reflect the resolutions passed by the VFW and are supported by our 2.1 million members 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-mail newsletter at www.vfw.org/weekly and follow the Capitol Hill blog at www.vfwonthehill.org



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2012



PRIORITY

Goals



Key VFW National Veterans, Legislative, Employment and Security Goals

2012 Priority Goals

VA HEALTH CARE

- Insist Congress provide sufficient funding to the Department of Veterans Affairs so it continues providing the highest quality care to wounded, ill and injured veterans.
- Ensure Congress provides sufficient funding for VA research into the identification, prevention and treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injuries, and other wounds to the mind, exploring alternative treatment options.
- Urge Congress to keep women's issues at the forefront of legislation to continually improve availability and access to VA programs, services and specialists.
- Oppose all efforts to eliminate or reduce presumptive service-connected conditions for wounded, ill and injured veterans, as well as to defeat any proposal that would lock out or increase fees on VA Priority Group 7 and 8 veterans.
- Provide adequate funding to maintain current building structures and continue to reduce the backlog of critical infrastructure gaps

SUICIDES & HOMELESSNESS

- Address the national crisis where 18 veterans commit suicide every day by ensuring that Congress properly fund DOD and VA awareness and support programs.
- Push Congress to properly oversee and fund homeless programs by increasing per diem rates, providing education and career training opportunities and making available substance abuse and mental health services.
- Ensure available permanent housing solutions for all homeless veterans—especially female veterans with children.

VA COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

- Urge Congress to use its funding and oversight authority to require the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) to reduce the claims backlog while improving the overall quality of ratings decisions.
- Call on Congress to require VA to install an IT infrastructure that will help transform VA into a 21st century agency. A timely, accurate claim should be what every veteran, service member and eligible family member receives.

SEAMLESS TRANSITION

- Demand the creation of one integrated electronic medical and service record that will follow service members from the time they raise their right hands to the time they are buried in a VA cemetery.
- Urge Congress and the Administration to improve Transition Assistance Programs to help new veterans successfully transition into civilian life.

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE

- Oppose all proposals that will damage morale and decimate the all-volunteer force.
- Call on Congress to remain fully committed to improving the quality of life for all active duty and Reserve Component members and their families.
- Support efforts to lower the Reserve Component retirement pay age to 55.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

- Urge Congress to address the highest unemployment rates among veterans in recent history.
- Fight to sustain G.I. Bill benefits, ensuring veterans receive the opportunities they have earned.
- Insist on legislation in Congress to strengthen USERRA and reverse legal decisions that tended to favor employers and undermine the employability of our National Guard and Reserve forces.
- Ensure Congress mandates that all federal agencies reach the 3-percent government-wide procurement goal for Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses.

DEFENSE AND 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.
- Ensure defense funding fully supports personnel Quality of Life initiatives, troop end strength requirements, and needed weapons systems development and replacement programs.
- 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 U.S. borders, shorelines and all ports of entry against foreign national's intent on doing us harm.

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 and that programs are fully funded.



Recently, deficit hawks have called on Congress to cut 10 specific military and veterans' quality of life benefits to pay for the last 10 years of war. This a breach of faith with America's war-fighters and we will continue to fight against these toxic proposals:

- Increase healthcare premiums for military retirees on TRICARE
- Increase pharmaceutical fees for troops, families and retirees
- Eliminate presumptive service-connected conditions for disabled and ill veterans
- Lock out or increase fees for Department of Veterans Affairs Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans
- Reduce cost-of-living allowances
- Freeze military pay
- End government subsidies to military commissaries
- Eliminate Department of Defense elementary schools stateside
- Eliminate the 20-year military retirement plan
- Eliminate DOD tuition reimbursement programs for service members

