



# **Veterans-For-Change Newsletter**

*A Voice of the Veterans*

*Week Ending Sunday, October 30, 2016*  
Volume 7, Issue 40

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## ***This-N-That***

While Veterans struggle every day just to get the medical care and attention they need and the benefits they deserve we continue to lose more and more of our countries Veterans to suicide and death due to illnesses contracted all due to their service.

Some of you I know personally from having worked on your claims, and some of you I know from your E-Mails to me telling me your stories and problems you've encountered with the VA, and others, although very few have told me of their good fortune to be able to get good, timely and proper medical care.

The solutions are easy, benefits are enormous, and cost savings would be astronomical, but that's all provided we could get rid of every single administrative person in the VA including the upper echelon including Secretary McDonald.

Install a computer medical records and claims processing system and launch it nationwide programmed with the best in security so that medical records cannot be tampered with or altered in any way, tie it in with the DoD records system and program in the entire VA Claims rules and regulations and allow it to make the decisions on all claims within a matter of minutes not months and years and not based on if an RO had a good meal the night before, etc.

To completely remove all human intervention unless, the claim is a truly complex one where human intervention is needed.

Then to install medical supply houses by region to service all VA Hospitals in that region giving the VA at minimum ten times more the buying power than it has already if not more with computer software to track all hospital equipment use and age so it can be replaced with the best equipment of the day and in technology on a routine schedule and not wait till that piece of equipment fails and might lead to the death of any Veteran.

Most know already that any of the nationally chartered VSO's aren't doing a thing to get further toward this goal, and privatization is also not the answer as outside VA channels costs cannot be controlled and therefore with increased demand on civilian doctors and hospitals will most certainly drive their costs up which in turn would be passed on to the VA and then the VA would be charged with deciding who gets what kind of care and where!

This would lead to even more delays and denials of service all based on high costs involved.

Now, imagine out of an estimated 22 million Veterans if only 4 million Veterans were to simply pick up the phone and call both their Senators and Congressman and place these demands on them, followed by a Fax as well as an E-Mail the pressure we could place on them.

Flooding their offices with all three, calls, faxes and E-Mails would force them to take immediate action as it would prevent them from doing any other business including lining their own pockets. So they would take action just so they could get back to doing what they do best, lining their pockets!

We know none of them get rich off a Congressman's or a Senator's salaries, and if you don't know this well then you would have to be totally blind.

We need YOU to help us to get you the medical care and benefits you laid down your lives for! So won't you take a few minutes once a week till the end of the year to call and remind them VETERANS should come first over any "refugee or illegal alien!"

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](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org)

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## **VETERANS ADVOCACY GROUP URGES CONGRESS TO STOP COLLECTION ACTION AGAINST NATIONAL GUARDSMEN**

News that California military personnel had offered unauthorized reenlistment bonuses to members of the National Guard years ago and are now demanding repayment is cause for congressional hearings, a leading advocate for veterans said today.

In a letter to Congressmen Steve Palazzo and Tim Walz, the executive director of Military-Veterans Advocacy asked the co-chairs of the National Guard Caucus to insist the Department of Defense discontinue collection efforts against the Guard members and veterans who were victims of this scheme.

"Military-Veterans Advocacy asks that Congress immediately direct the military to forebear further collections to allow for hearings on this matter," Cdr. John Wells (USN, Ret.) wrote to the lawmakers. "Principles of fairness and equity require that individual soldiers who agreed to serve for years in the National Guard in return for this bonus should not have to repay it now. We believe hearings are necessary to inquire into the extent of this problem. We have resolved similar situations in Louisiana and the misrepresentations by state officials may be widespread."

Media Contact: CDR John B. Wells, USN (Retired), Executive Director, Military-Veterans Advocacy. 985 641 1855, 985-290-6940, [johnlawesq@msn.com](mailto:johnlawesq@msn.com). For more information on Military-Veterans Advocacy see [www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org](http://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org)

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## ***Government Announces Amount of COLA Increase***

Last week the government announced that the COLA for 2017 will be 0.3 percent. This is the same for military retirement pay as well as for Social Security recipients. Obviously, it's not much of an increase.

To make matters worse, since military retirees have to enroll in Medicare Part B in order to have Tricare For Life, some will face an increase in their Medicare Part B premium next year.

According to a report in Federal News Radio.com, "Unfortunately for some seniors, even the small increase will probably be wiped out by an expected increase in Medicare Part B premiums, which are usually deducted from Social Security payments.

"By law, rising premiums for most Medicare recipients cannot exceed their Social Security cost-of-living increase. That's known as the "hold harmless" provision. However, new enrollees and high-income retirees are not covered by that provision, so they could face higher Medicare premiums, which will be announced later this year."

The cost-of-living adjustment is based on a broad measure of prices generated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It measures price changes for food, housing, clothing, transportation, energy, medical care, recreation and education. Low fuel prices are the major reason the inflation rate is so low this year.

The increase will become effective as of December 30 of this year.

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## ***100 Cities/100 Memorials***

The U.S. World War I Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum and Library have announced a new program to help people across the country restore and preserve local World War I memorials. 100 Cities/100 Memorials is a fund-matching program in which groups or individuals can: (1) identify local World War I memorials in their area; (2) put together a conservation treatment proposal for a memorial in distress; (2) submit their plan for consideration for matching grant funds; and (4) have the memorial treated by an accredited conservator, with communication help and possible matching funds. The details of the program, including guidelines and online application form, are available on the [U.S. World War I Centennial Commission website](#).

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## ***Care Packages for Women Veterans in Michigan***

The Joe Winslow Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution in Traverse City, Michigan is packing beauty bags full of toiletries will soon be on their way to women veterans in the state of Michigan. Around a thousand "Treat Her Like A Lady" bags will be given to each of the VA hospitals in the state and from there given to women veterans who need them. The chapter is accepting donations of toiletries, small bags, gift cards or money for the project. To donate, contact Jeanne McMillan at [jeannemcmillan1953@gmail.com](mailto:jeannemcmillan1953@gmail.com).

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## ***Arlington Cemetery Faces Reality of Lack of Space for Burials***

On Wednesday of last week TREA's legislative director Larry Madison attended a meeting with Congressional staff members from the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees and officials from Arlington National Cemetery. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the fact that Arlington National Cemetery is running out of space.

The lack of space is not immediate, but when using projections about the number of burials Arlington is likely to have in the coming years, decisions about how to deal with the problem have to be made fairly soon. Officials are in the process of acquiring new land but Arlington is surrounded by highways so the opportunities to increase the size of the cemetery are very limited.

The two main options are to changes the eligibility for burial in Arlington, or to acquire additional land elsewhere that is separate from the current property.

TREA will continue to be involved in meetings with Arlington officials in the coming months and we will be sending out a survey to TREA members in the near future to ask those who desire to be buried in Arlington their opinions about what direction to go.

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## ***Moment of Silence on Veterans Day***

President Obama has signed a new law that calls on all Americans to pause voluntarily for two minutes to honor the sacrifice of veterans. The silence will occur simultaneously across the nation on Veterans Day — at 2:11 p.m. eastern standard time on Veterans Day.

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### **To Contact your Members of Congress**

To Call your Representative: 202-225-2305

To call your Senator: 202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call different members of Congress: 202-224-3121

Toll FREE Number: 866-272-6622

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## ***Specially Adapted Housing Grants Increase***

Maximum rates for specially adapted housing grants went up 10/1. For more details and for a guide to these grants, see [Military.com's Special Adapted Housing FAQ](#).

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## ***Well-Child Visits Now Covered under TRICARE Policy***

Well-child visits for [TRICARE](#) users over age six, as well as physicals required for school admissions, will now be covered due to newly updated rules. The policy change, issued this week, seeks to bring the healthcare system's rules closer in line with the pediatric care standards known as "Bright Futures," included in the Affordable Care Act. Those rules, laid out by the American Academy of Pediatrics, are considered the blueprint for preventive child healthcare. Tricare is exempt by law from the Affordable Care Act.

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## ***Women Veterans and Disability***

Women veterans with disabilities, medical conditions, or injuries incurred or aggravated during active military service — no matter when or where they served — may be eligible to receive tax-free monthly disability benefits. There are many ways to apply for VA disability benefits — more details are available at [ExploreVA](#). The fastest and simplest way is to submit all supporting documents and evidence together in a fully developed claim (FDC) online at the [eBenefits website](#) or by mail. If you think you want to file but are not quite ready yet, start an FDC, save your incomplete application, gather all your documents and then submit your claim up to one year later to preserve your effective date. Learn about eligibility requirements and how to apply for benefits at the [eBenefits website](#).

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## ***TRICARE to Expand Coverage***

TRICARE is adding new services and screenings. Effective Jan.1, 2017, TRICARE will cover annual preventive office visits for all Prime beneficiaries 6 years of age and older. TRICARE Standard beneficiaries can receive preventive services with no cost-share or copayment through disease prevention examinations. Also, the annual well-woman exam will continue to be covered for all Prime and Standard beneficiaries under age 65 with no cost-share or copayment. If you have recently received any of these services, please be sure to save your receipts and file a claim. The regional contractors will be ready to process claims for the new preventive benefits on Nov. 14, 2016. For more information, visit the [TRICARE Filing Claims webpage](#) and the [TRICARE Preventive Services webpage](#).

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## ***Operation Mail Call***



Operation Mail Call needs your help! We need cards and letters to send to our troops currently serving on foreign soil.

Our men and women in uniform often go months without hugging their children, walking through the park with a significant other or enjoying Mom's home-cooked Sunday dinners.

Ask them where they'd go if they had a free plane ticket anywhere in the world, and the overwhelming majority would say, "home."

Of course, we can't replace the hugs, the love or the secret family chili recipe – but with your help, we can provide them a connection to their fellow Americans who are grateful for their service.

Now, we're hoping you'll take your support to the next level by sending more cards and letters. Hand made cards by your children, or class mates are a terrific means of putting smiles on their faces even if only for a moment.

Cards and Letters of encouragement to help boost moral and let them know we sincerely appreciate the job they are doing and look forward to they day they are all brought home. Your card or letter will show your appreciation and help thousands more American heroes feel connected to the people they love and the country they serve.

Please help us to make a powerful expression of how much their fellow Americans care about them.

Thank you so much for all you're doing to show our service men and women they are appreciated missed and loved.

If you're a school teacher, please contact me at my E-Mail address at the top, our troops love to hear from kids too!

For more information, visit: <http://veterans-for-change.org/5439-operation-mail-call-2>

Homeland Security Acquisitions: Joint Requirements Council's Initial Approach Is Generally Sound and It Is Developing a Process to Inform Investment Priorities. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-171>

Nuclear Material: Agencies Have Sound Procedures for Managing Exchanges but Could Improve Inventory Monitoring. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-713>

Superfund Sediment Sites: EPA Considers Risk Management Principles but Could Clarify Certain Procedures. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-777>

Military Personnel: Performance Measures Needed to Determine How Well DOD's Credentialing Program Helps Servicemembers [Reissued on October 21, 2016]. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-133>

Federal Procurement: Smarter Buying Initiatives Can Achieve Additional Savings, but Improved Oversight and Accountability Needed. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-164>

Presidential Travel: Estimated Costs for a Specific Presidential Trip to Illinois and Florida. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-24>

Joint Information Environment: DOD Needs to Strengthen Governance and Management [Reissued on October 25, 2016]. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-593>

U.S. Capitol Grounds Concerts: Improvements Needed in Management Approval Controls over Certain Payments. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-44>

Motor Carriers: Better Information Needed to Assess Effectiveness and Efficiency of Safety Interventions. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-49>

Opioid Addiction: Laws, Regulations, and Other Factors Can Affect Medication-Assisted Treatment Access. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-833>

VA Health Care: Processes to Evaluate, Implement, and Monitor Organizational Structure Changes Needed. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-803>

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### ***Arrests Made in TRICARE Rx Kickback Scheme***

Federal agents have charged a dozen defendants with fraud and conspiracy in a kickback scheme involving compound drugs and [TRICARE](#). The alleged conspiracy to market and prescribe exorbitantly priced pain and scar creams of doubtful effectiveness and under false pretenses bilked TRICARE out of \$102 million in just 21 months. Read the full [Military Update](#) article to learn more about this scheme and its possible impact on TRICARE Rx programs.

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### ***Free Online Course Expanded to Veteran Spouses***

The Department of Veterans Affairs has expanded a partnership with online learning portal [Coursera](#), to not just military spouses, but caregivers as well, I was excited. The Coursera veteran spouse education benefits allow users to access one free course within any given specialization. That means, for example, if you want to take data science, you could take one of the \$49 classes for free, but you would have to pay for the remaining nine courses within that specialization, which run between \$29 and \$49 each. Signing up for the benefit is easy. First, go here and fill out this [Coursera veteran opportunity](#) form.

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### *Donate Suits for Service Members*

Farmers Insurance has announced the launch of its nationwide Suits for Soldiers program to help all active duty military personnel (regardless of service branch) transition to civilian work and life. Through November 30, Americans across the country can support veterans transitioning into the civilian workforce by donating gently used and dry cleaned suits or professional attire for men and women at more than 13,000 Farmers agencies. Visit the [Farmers Insurance agent locator](#) to find your nearest Farmers Insurance agent. Veterans can also visit the [Farmers Insurance website](#) for additional resources to aid in the transition to the civilian workforce.

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### *Motor Homes for Homeless Vets*

The California nonprofit group Paso Cares and its program RVs for Veterans is seeking donations of RVs, motor homes, travel trailers, fifth wheels, trucks or vans for homeless veterans to live in. For more information, visit the [Paso Cares website](#) or call Cherie Michaelson at (805) 712-7067.

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### ***Support Military-Veterans Advocacy***

Please support Military-Veterans Advocacy through the Combined Federal Campaign. Our CFC number is 59905

Amazon Shoppers: you can support Military-Veterans Advocacy by going to "Amazon Smile" for your shopping.

The prices are the same but Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Military-Veterans Adovacy Inc. Bookmark the link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/38-3890520> and support us every time you shop.

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#### **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

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### ***No FluMist Available Through TRICARE for 2016***

The intranasal flu vaccine known as FluMist will not be available at Department of Defense (DoD) facilities or covered by TRICARE during the 2016-17 influenza season. This season, the DoD's entire supply of flu vaccine will be injectable. It is recommended for everyone, ages six months and older. The DoD expects to have enough supply of injectable vaccine at military treatment facilities (MTFs) for all age groups. Read more at [Spousebuzz](#).

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***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 1,700 hits per day, and downloads average 1,400 per day with a total **3,065,093** 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](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)

- Documents Library with over 15,616 documents on-line (Updated: **08/02/16**)
- FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers (Updated: **02/20/16**)
- Multiple Forums
- Job Postings (Updated: **09/15/16**)
- Memorial Pages (Updated: **10/10/16**)
- News (Articles On-Line: **6,085**)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,444, Added 1 New Links (Updated: **09/19/16**)

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

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### ***Pay \$0 Co-Pays & Rx Costs with a TRICARE Supplement***

Doctor and hospital bills are expensive even when you're covered by TRICARE. Help minimize or even eliminate out-of-pocket expenses with the [TRICARE Insurance Supplement Plan](#).

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<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

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### ***Links to Other Stories***

- 1) *Republican Senators scold Obama for VA wait-times*
- 2) *Tiny homes built for Veterans, by Veterans*
- 3) *VA to Congress: Save the Veterans Choice Act*
- 4) *VA treats patients' impatience with clinical pharmacists*
- 5) *VA Will Probe Alleged Suicide Cover-Up*
- 6) *Village of tiny homes being built in KC for homeless Veterans*

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](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)

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Are you seeking employment? Been looking and not found the right job?

Well Veterans-For-Change is working hard to bring you more information on Job Fairs and Job postings available across the country.

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/category/167-job-fairs-job-postings>

If you're an employer and have a job to post, send an E-Mail to: [Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

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### ***TRICARE to Expand Preventive Service Coverage***

TRICARE is adding new services and screenings to ensure their preventive services are aligned with recommendations of the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), and the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) guidelines.

Effective Jan.1, 2017, TRICARE will cover annual preventive office visits for all Prime beneficiaries 6 years of age and older. Children under 6 are already covered by existing well-child coverage. This will ensure children in developing stages receive observation, physical examination, screening, immunizations, and various counseling services. TRICARE Standard beneficiaries can receive preventive services with no cost-share or copayment through Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HP&DP) examinations (i.e. in connection with a covered immunization or cancer screening).

Additionally, the annual well-woman exam will continue to be covered for all Prime and Standard beneficiaries under age 65 with no cost-share or copayment. The new covered services include free genetic counseling by a TRICARE-authorized provider.

An authorized provider is any individual, institution/organization, or supplier that is licensed by a state, accredited by national organization, or meets other standards of the medical community, and is certified to provide benefits under TRICARE. There are two types of TRICARE-authorized providers: Network and Non-Network.

TRICARE will also cover stool DNA testing once every 3 years starting at age 50 for those who have an average risk of colon cancer. The effective date of the coverage is June 21, 2016.

If you have recently received any of these services, please be sure to save your receipts and file a claim. The regional contractors will be ready to process claims for the new preventive benefits on Nov. 14, 2016, the implementation date of this change. The implementation date is the date the contractor must be ready to communicate and process claims for this benefit.



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### ***VA Makes Another Large Error***

Thousands of veterans may have been improperly diagnosed by the VA and it admits to improperly testing for traumatic brain injuries from 2007 through 2015.

Nate Anderson, who enlisted after 9/11, served in the United States Army for 12 years and in 2008, was assigned to his first unit at Fort Bragg and deployed to central Afghanistan.

“The sun had just risen and we were driving into a town,” he recalled. “My vehicle hit a pressure plate IED.” Anderson said he just remembers a loud blast.

“It was an absolute shock,” he said. “We weren’t really sure what happened, but when I came to, my teammate, who was sitting in the back, had been catapulted over and landed on our hood and his legs were shooting blood into the windshield.”

Luckily, Anderson made it back home but it didn’t take long for him to start noticing problems.

His short-term memory just wasn’t the same. He was having trouble formulating sentences.

He went to the Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg where he was screened. “They sent me out the door, said I was OK,” Anderson said.

Over several months, he made several trips to several VA hospitals and each time he got the same response. “They sent me out the door,” Anderson said.

But he knew he wasn’t OK so he sought care outside of the VA. After a few tests, a doctor diagnosed him with a traumatic brain injury.

It wasn’t until this year, eight years after his incident, [that this letter came in the mail](#) explaining why.

“I had been seen by a number of VA physicians that were not qualified to treat or diagnose TBI,” Anderson said.

And it turns out – he wasn’t the only one. The VA confirmed nearly 25,000 veterans may have been misdiagnosed.

“Almost 25,000 veterans nationwide, that is hardly an isolated incident. That is a systemic failure on the part of the VA,” Anderson said.

The VA sent out letters to all veterans they believe may have had an improper screening.

VA policy requires TBI exams to be done by a physiologist, a psychiatrist, a neurologist, or a neurosurgeon. The 25,000 veterans in this situation were not screened by one of these specialists.

After getting the letter, Anderson returned to the VA and was diagnosed with a TBI.

The VA is now hoping others will do the same.

Anderson now serves as National Field Director at Concerned Veterans for America. He says he’s pushing for VA accountability.

If you are a veteran who is concerned about your TBI exam you can call 1-800-749-8387.

Source: NAUS

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

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If you received this newsletter as a courtesy or a forward from a friend or relative, you can sign up to receive in your E-mail every week.

<https://gem.godaddy.com/signups/193302/join>

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### ***Veterans-For-Change, Inc.***

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today

[www.Veterans-For-Change.org](http://www.Veterans-For-Change.org)

*Serving those who served!*

***Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and Family***

<b>Distribution</b>	
Express Mail	144,605
Boston	72,573
Courtesy Copies	3,500
Department of VA	11,738
DoD	16,898
Face Book Pages	3,344
Google	17,667
Los Angeles	125,853
Microsoft	3,598
National Guard	2615
New York	150,127
Other Social Media	34,554
San Francisco	75,265
Twitter	34
US House of Reps & Staff	832
US Senators & Staff	99
University of So. California	4,693
US Air Force	14,667
US Army	41,072
US Marines	23,298

US Navy	17,008
Veterans	19,073,390
Washington DC	136,493
Yahoo	134
	19,974,057

**Please do not reply to this E-Mail, this is an unattended E-Mail address, please send all correspondence to: [Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)**