



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, November 19, 2017

Volume 8, Issue 47



This-N-That

Well, something I never in this world imagined would happen has actually happened. And of all things that could have been done with the funds, oh lets say pay off claims, hire licensed staff that want the job, are caring and compassionate, etc., the Department of Defense approved a **SEXUAL REASSIGNMENT SURGERY** all very hush, hush!

An active-duty service member has undergone gender reassignment surgery, the Pentagon!

Defense Department spokesman Dana White said in a statement that the military's health coverage paid for the

surgery because the doctor who performed the operation deemed it to be medically necessary.

"Military hospitals do not have the surgical expertise to perform this type of surgery, therefore it was conducted in a private hospital," said White, who added that that because the service member "had already begun a sex-reassignment course of treatment ... a waiver was approved by the director of the Defense Health Agency."

Army Maj. Dave Eastburn said that waivers are required and routinely approved for medical procedures that military facilities don't have the expertise to perform.

Just minimal surgical costs alone can be from \$50,000 to as much as \$175,000 depending on many factors, then there are follow-up hormone therapy for life and I've not found out for fact as of yet, but TRICARE could be on the hook too for as much as \$75,000.

The reason this was allowed to happen was a Federal Court Judge suspended President Trump's Executive Order disallowing this. And as I said it was done all very quietly, while other things were being done to "distract" us from other important issues.

This is just one reason I truly wish Veterans would jump on the band wagon and speak up. A few thousand helps but in no way is near enough.

Imagine if you will, if 40 million Veterans were to all call in to their Reps in DC, follow that up with E-Mails using their

websites, and if you have a fax machine, to fax them as well, and all 40 million Veterans all saying the same thing at the same time.

This would create so much havoc in their offices that it would prevent every member of Congress from doing the one and only thing they do best, "**LINE THEIR POCKETS!**" And once we are successful in disrupting their offices, they'd be forced into addressing the issue swiftly and immediately if only for the simple reason they want and need to get back to "**LINING THEIR POCKETS!**"

We'd see serious changes in the VA Healthcare System, faster claims approvals, less denials, improved medical care, expedited appointments and the list could go on and on and on!

From talking to so many Veterans over the years, I know what prevents most, PRIDE! But don't you want and need the medical care and benefits? Aren't you totally sick and tired of constantly fighting to get what you are more than due and certainly earned?

It really kills me when I hear another Veteran tell me they give up, they are sick and tired of fighting and it's no longer worth it, and usually by that time their health is so bad that even if they got the medical care, it's already too late!

So I am asking you, please consider or for many to reconsider getting back into the ring and help fight. We can provide a simple, easy way to fight and it only costs you

just a little bit of time every week. and most have unlimited long distance.

And if that's not easy enough, then you can write letters with just your name, city and state and send to me, and I will include in the weekly fax blast to all 535 members of Congress. But seriously re-consider getting back into the ring and helping us help you by helping in the fight.

I really don't want to hear from anyone telling me we lost another Veteran. Even though I know this is not reality, we can at least kick the number of Veterans we lose way down!

Send an E-Mail to Secretary of the VA, Dr. Shulkin at david.shulkin@va.gov and tell him he needs to take swift and immediate action to implement a fully automated claims system.

Then I'd like for you to send a message to President Trump at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/> and ask that he put serious pressure on both Congress and the Secretary of the VA to find a software program and implement a fully automated Claims System and see to it that Congress holds it's promises!

I do thank you so much for your service and we'd like to wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving!

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

VA Outlines Implementation Of Forever GI Bill

The Forever GI Bill, also known as the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, became law on August 16, but the VA hasn't said too much about when the many changes in the law will become effective. Last week they released their first statement telling us when we can expect to see some of these changes take effect. For more details, see this [article](#).

House Passes New National Defense Authorization Act

Last week we sent out an alert to our members on our email list asking them to contact their Senators and Representatives about the final version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that was being negotiated by a House-Senate conference committee. You responded by the hundreds and we are grateful for all those who took the time to contact their members of Congress.

The committee has finished its work and we can report that

we won a partial victory. The final bill preserves the grandfather provision for working age retirees, which is what we had asked for.

However, the bill raises [pharmacy fees](#) and encourages greater use of generic drugs, on-base pharmacies and mail order. Co-pays for a 30-day supply of brand drugs at retail, or a 90-day supply by mail order, will be raised to \$28 and will climb to \$45 by 2026. Co-pays for generic drugs at retail will be raised to \$10 in 2018 and to \$14 by 2026. To encourage greater use of base pharmacies, where drugs will remain free of charge, the plan will add a \$10 co-pay for mail order generic drugs, rising to \$14 by 2026.

Survivors of members who die on active duty and members retired for disability would be exempt from the drug co-pay increases.

Finally, we said that neither the House nor the Senate solved the problem of the SBP-DIC offset in their versions of the NDAA. The final agreement in the NDAA conference bill makes permanent and begins adjusting for inflation the \$310-a-month [Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance](#) (SSIA) that was set to expire next May.

Congress won't eliminate the SBP-DIC offset entirely, arguing that doing so is unaffordable. But House-Senate conferees accepted the Senate plan to make the SSIA permanent and to adjust it annually using the same cost-of-living adjustment or COLA used to protect the value of military retired pay.

The point being that although survivors will keep getting the \$310 a month, Congress told them that the SBP-DIC offset will not be entirely offset.

TREA does not accept that and we will continue to fight for the total elimination of the offset.

There were victories for active duty personnel also. They will receive a 2.4 percent pay raise instead of the 2.1 percent that the Senate had wanted.

In addition, the Senate's plan to cut housing allowances for dual service couples with children was thrown out. Under the Senate plan, one of the service members no longer would have been eligible for Basic Allowance for Housing at the higher "with dependents" rate.

However, on top of all of this is the fact that Congress has not yet passed a budget for the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2018, which we are now in. If they cannot agree on a new budget and instead opt to continue operating with the same budget as DoD did in fy2017, much of this could change because the NDAA assumes an increased DoD budget for fy2018. We may not know for sure what will happen until mid to late-December.

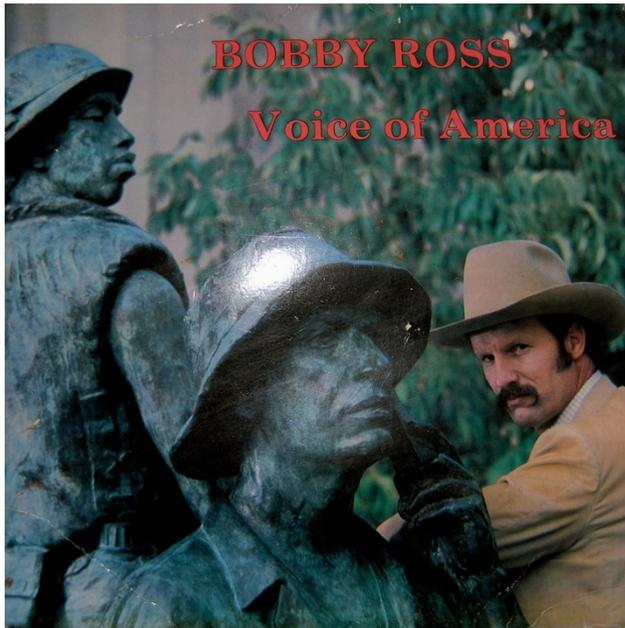
Source: TREA



House, Senate Agree on 2.4% Pay Raise for 2018

House and Senate negotiators have backed a 2.4 percent [military pay raise](#) for fiscal 2018, topping President Donald Trump's recommendation of 2.1 percent. In a background briefing Wednesday, House staffers said the proposed Fiscal 2018 National Defense Authorization Act would also boost end strength by more than 20,000 troops and funding for a wide variety of weapon systems, from aircraft to ships to ground vehicles. For more details, see this [article](#).

Veterans Day 2017!



Been an interesting month so far this November of 2017. We just celebrated a real nice Veterans Day here in Sacramento on Saturday, and last week we took in our Winter hay so I wanted to share with

you. Nothing special. The Holidays are upon us and I'm going to do my best to keep in touch.

LT Bobby Ross

<https://youtu.be/w0IPjHcglQI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmlqz-uQvHs>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUXKEeLMX_Y

My LRRP Network will be 30 years old next month, so if you want to join, click [HERE](#).

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 2,200 hits per day, and downloads average 1,200 per day with a total **3,685,656** 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

- Documents Library with over **16,155** documents on-line (Updated: 11/13/17)

- FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers
- Multiple Forums
 - o Afghanistan Veterans
 - o FMP - Foreign Medial Program
 - o Gulf War & Desert Storm Veterans
 - o Iraq Veterans
 - o Korean Veterans
 - o Men Veterans Forum
 - o Mental Health for Veterans
 - o Political Issues
 - o Suggestion Box
 - o The Mess Hall
 - o VA Hospitals and Medical Centers
 - o Veteran Affairs
 - o Vietnam Veterans
 - o Welcome Mat
 - o Women Veterans Forum
 - o WW II Veterans
- Job Postings
- Memorial Pages (Updated: **11/02/17**)
- News (Articles On-Line: 6,896)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than **3,614**, Added 2 New Links
(Updated: 11/12/17)

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

VA Launches Faster Appeals Process

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that it is launching the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP) with the goal of providing veterans with the earliest possible resolution of their disagreement with VA's decision on their benefit claims. By February 2019, all requests for review of VA decisions will be processed under the new, multi-lane process. The new law includes safeguards ensuring claimants receive the earliest effective date possible for their claims. Veterans who disagree with the decisions they receive in RAMP can appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals in the new process and have their appeal decided by the Board when the new law becomes effective in February 2019. Veterans who participate in RAMP will not be able to return to the legacy appeals process.



VA Benefits Delivery at Discharge Program

The Benefits Delivery at Discharge program was recently redesigned to allow most servicemembers to receive disability benefit decisions the day after their discharge. These changes will allow Veterans Affairs to conduct exams, review medical evidence and process ratings before servicemembers are released from active duty. Service members using the program can submit their claim for a service-connected disability 90 to 180 days before being discharged from active duty. To participate, Airmen must attend a VA examination 45 days after the claim is submitted. Claims will not be processed until after their separation. For more information, visit the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) [Pre-Discharge webpage](#) or call the Veterans Affairs Call Center at 1-800-827-1000.



Support H.R. 3558, Improved Access for Women Veterans

Representative Susan Brooks (IN) introduced H.R. 3558, the Improve Access to Care for Our Female Veterans Act. This bill would improve the VA's procedures for ensuring

that environment of care inspections are completed and deficiencies are reported accurately and timely by clarifying and strengthening roles and responsibilities for inspections in VA medical facilities.

The bill seeks to ensure all areas in VA facilities adequately meet privacy and security standards. Safety and privacy accommodations can be made through simple investments such as installation of privacy curtains or locks on doors. These minor modifications help create an environment that allows all VA patients, but particularly women, to fully engage in their treatment and recovery without privacy concerns. Lack of these reasonable accommodations may be particularly troubling for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress or other disorders related to military sexual trauma.

In addition, the measure would require VA to collect and monitor access data from women veterans seeking care through the Veterans' Choice Program to ensure they have access to timely care when sent to a community provider.

Please ask your Representative to support H.R. 3558 by sending the prepared letter or composing one on your own.

Thank you for your participation in the DAV Commander's Action Network.

Click [HERE](#) and send your message!

Tax Reform May Force Cuts to Medicare

The Congressional Budget Office said yesterday that under current congressional "pay as you go" rules, the proposed tax legislation would cause an automatic, across-the-board cut of \$136 billion to federal "mandatory" spending. Of that, a maximum of \$25 billion would come from Medicare.

This is of interest to TREA: The Enlisted Association and its members because Medicare is a first payer for TRICARE For Life.

For more information on this important issue, click [HERE!](#)

Source: TREA



Your actions
could save a life.

Showing you care can make a big difference to someone in crisis.

VeteransCrisisLine.net

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

**Vietnam Caucus of the American
Public Health Association**

Greetings from Louisville:

The Vietnam Caucus of the American Public Health Association (APHA) is now planning to include presentations at each annual meeting, the next in San Diego, Nov of 2018, on veterans' issues as well as dioxin and agent orange findings in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and other effects of the war. APHA is the largest public health organization in the USA, perhaps in the world. About 12,000 or more attend the annual meetings. The presentators vary from community persons, veterans, scientists, government officials and others. Presenters must pay their own expenses but invited speakers to our caucus do not need to pay for one day registration.

I am coordinator of that caucus and am hoping to find about 3 or 4 presenters to give 15 minute presentations on aspects of veterans issues as well as effects of war as well.

Can you let those on your e mail list know of this?

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Veterans Sought to Participate in Army Trials

Warrior Care and Transition's Adaptive Reconditioning Program will accept applications 1 Nov - 5 Dec from Veterans interested in competing in the 2018 Army Trials at Fort Bliss, Texas. Army Trials, scheduled for 25 Feb - 9 Mar 2018, is the competition that supports the AR Program in determining who will represent Team Army at the 2018 Department of Defense Warrior Games 2-9 June in Colorado Springs, Colo. Army Trials is open to veterans who have not competed in two or more Warrior Games and meet additional criteria. All veterans interested in participating should review all eligibility requirements at the [Warrior Care and Transition website](#) then download and complete the application and submit it to the AR Mailbox at usarmy.pentagon.medcom-wtc.list.adaptive-reconditioning@mail.mil no later than 5 Dec.

**CONTACT YOUR
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!**

To Call your Representative:

202-225-2305

To Call your Senators:

202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call Different Members of Congress:

202-224-3121

TOLL FREE: 866-272-6622

PLEASE... STOP Making Excuses!

www.veterans-for-change.org

**Dramatic Tricare Drug Cost Hike
Advances in Congress**

Tricare pharmacy co-pays for most drugs will go up in 2018 due to a measure expected to be approved by lawmakers. The measure, approved by the Senate early this year, is included in the final version of the annual Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), congressional staff said Wednesday at a briefing with reporters. Over the next 12 years, the measure would steadily increase co-pays for most drugs through retail pharmacies, while adding new fees to those received by mail. For more details, see this [news article](#).

Tax Proposal Would Reverse Progress in Ensuring all California Veterans have a Place to Call Home

Sacramento – Today CalVet Secretary Dr. Vito Imbasciani issued the following statement on the tax proposal in Congress:

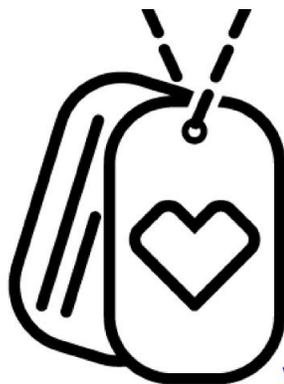
“Former service members living in California could end up on the streets if Congress passes its draft tax proposal. This hasty plan would eliminate tax-exempt bonds, which help us fight homelessness and find affordable housing for California veterans.

"Two of our critical housing programs rely on tax-exempt bonds – Proposition 41, which funds affordable housing for homeless vets, and the state’s 95-year old CalVet Loan program that makes homeownership possible for veterans who cannot qualify for a private loan. The CalVet Loan program has helped more than 600 veterans and their families secure affordable housing in the past year, and Proposition 41 has helped us place more than 2,000 veterans and their families into stable homes. The careless tax proposal would reverse this progress and exacerbate California’s housing crisis. We owe our former service members better than that."

Source: CalVet

Walmart Launching Site for Products from All Military Branches

Walmart is launching a new e-commerce site dedicated to selling officially-licensed products from all five branches of the military. The site will present an opportunity for consumers to "Shop to Salute" in the weeks leading up to the holiday season. A portion of the royalties from sales of licensed products from the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps will fund Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs of their respective branches. The MWR program provides military members and their families quality of life programs and services aimed to boost morale and resiliency, with benefits such as fitness centers, libraries, parks and picnic areas, restaurants, family child care and youth and school aged services. For more details, visit the Walmart [website](#). To shop the new U.S. Military showcase, visit www.walmart.com/usmilitary.



**Our values
match yours.**



www.veterans-for-change.org

TREA Supports New Bill to Encourage Veterans in Technical Careers

TREA has endorsed a new bi-partisan piece of legislation introduced by Representatives Neal Dunn (R- Fla.) and Mark Takano (D- Calif.) called the Supporting Veterans in STEM Careers Act.

The purpose of the bill is to encourage veterans to study and pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and computer science, in coordination with other Federal agencies that serve veterans.

The bill requires the National Science Foundation (NSF) to develop a veteran outreach plan and to track veteran participation, including data on veterans in annual science and engineering indicators report.

In addition, it updates the Noyce Teacher Scholarship program, NSF Fellowship programs, and cyber grant programs to include outreach to veterans.

It also creates a National Science and Technology Council Subcommittee under the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy on veterans and military families and STEM Education, including looking at career barriers such as transfer of credits and skills.

This bill is different from most veteran-related legislation in

that it was sent to the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology for consideration.

We believe this bill would be good news for veterans interested in pursuing a career in one of the STEM areas. We also are looking into whether or not new legislation is needed to encourage veterans to seek vocational education, since not all veterans are interested in going to college.

Source: TREA



VA Benefits "Reform"?

It is looking very likely that we will be facing dramatic proposals to change the present VA benefits structure. Last week VA Secretary David Sulkin, while celebrating Veterans Day, called for an overhaul and realignment of the present system.

At the National Press Club, he said: "Today ... I call for a

new way of thinking about benefits. I want to see an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders about rationalizing veterans benefits - a veterans benefit advisory board that can bring clarity to what we're trying to do for veterans and what's best and how we can do that in the best way."

He complained that in the last 150 years various veterans were created at different times, by different Administrations and Congresses reacting to many different wars and situations." A Veterans Advisory Board" could focus on what he said was the main goals of the Veterans Benefits Administrations programs: "providing financial security for those who are severely disabled, providing mental and physical wellbeing to veterans, offering economic and professional opportunities and helping them reintegrate back into civilian life."

This sounds like another call for disability payments to go only "the severely disabled." Later in the speech he said: "We have to emphasize service-connection for disabilities so we aren't compensating veterans for age-related issues." We have heard suggestions like these for at least the last 20 years. Why do we need to pay for small disabilities of 10% or 20%? Why should there be service connected presumptions for exposure to chemicals that cause illnesses like cancers that become more common as people age?

Instead of payments the Secretary says that:" We need more incentives for achieving wellness and independence. This should be a system that focuses on veterans' abilities,

not on their disabilities. VA needs to transform into an organization where we are veterans' advocates and we facilitate them getting benefits, not being the gatekeeper of benefits decisions."

He tried to reassure us that this will not focus on saving money but on effective service by saying: "Let me be clear though, this is not about taking away benefits from veterans. This is about making benefits work better for veterans and transforming the Department of Veterans Affairs to do better for years and for generations for future veterans. I think they deserve no less than that."

But then he correctly mentioned that the estimated costs of new programs throughout history have been low. He goes on to note that before we started to successfully chip away at DoD retired pay and VA disability pay offset no DoD retirees could receive their retired pay and VA disability and that "by 2013 59,000 DoD retirees received concurrent benefits, along with Social Security, which totaled more than \$3.5 billion"That "Mandatory VA benefits spending has risen by more than \$80 billion over the past 30-to-40 years. The department spent \$95.3 billion on mandatory benefits in 2017, well above the \$13.7 billion total in 1980."..... And that "Administrative costs of the Veterans Benefits Administration have gone up by \$4 billion --- from \$1 billion in 2000 to \$5 billion in 2017."

This surely looks like at least one cause for this proposal is to save money. You should know that TREA's Washington Office is focused on this possible threat to your earned

benefits. We also urge you to make sure that both your Congressional representatives and the Administration know what programs are important to you and what you and your fellow servicemembers did to earn these benefits.

Source: TREA



Taking Command of Women's Health

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States. But, you can take steps to reduce your risk through healthier habits such as limiting alcohol consumption, saying no to smoking, eating plenty of vegetables and fruits, getting quality sleep, reducing stress, and exercising. These same habits reduce the risk of developing diabetes, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and other chronic conditions. Also, do not slack off on preventive care, including regular checkups, cancer screenings including colonoscopies, and reproductive health care. Check out the resources TRICARE offers, including tools to help you [quit smoking](#), as well as tools on [health.mil](#) to help you focus on your [physical fitness and weight management](#).



Military-Veteran Advocacy's Analysis of the decision in Gray v. Shulkin/BWNVVA v. Shulkin

OK, the Federal Circuit dismissed our case against the Secretary that attacked his exclusion of the bays and harbors. On the face of it we lost but not so fast.

Although we hoped for a different result, we should not lose hope. We knew that this was a possibility. The Court's 2-1

decision to dismiss the suit was on jurisdictional grounds. Although they did not reach the merits, the majority opinion did note that the needs of the veterans were urgent and that they would consider a denial of one of the pending requests for rulemaking. And they indicated they were open to review of the regulation via an individual action.

The good news is that Military-Veterans Advocacy has recently finished briefing an individual action that will test the line drawn by the Secretary. This case will urge the Court to extend the presumption of exposure to the territorial seas. The court also seemed to rebuke the Haas court by indicating that Chevron level deference is not appropriate for interpretive regulations. Chevron level deference means basically that the Court's have to allow the agency to do what they want. So the rejection of Chevron is good news.

The last factor begs the question however, if there is no ability to gain judicial review under the Administrative Procedures Act for interpretive regulations such as the M-21 Manual. For this reason, Military-Veterans Advocacy will ask for a rehearing/rehearing en banc. The District of Columbia Court of Appeals rejected jurisdiction a similar action in *Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association, Inc. et al., v. McDonald*, 82 F.Supp. 3d 443 (D.C. Cir. 2015). The holding in that case was that the Veterans Judicial Reform Act was the sole remedy for the Blue Water Navy. In light of this decision, it appears that there is no method for seeking APA review of the M-21 Manual.

Perhaps in recognition of this the Court reminded the VA that bypassing the rulemaking provision leaves the regulation somewhat short of lacking the force and effect of law. By implication, the Court has reminded the VA that *Gray v. McDonald*, 27 Vet.App. 313 (2015) is still good law.

Military-Veterans Advocacy was heartened by Judge Dyk's strong dissent. That dissent will be another basis for the petition for rehearing. Judge Dyk's well reasoned analysis supports the jurisdictional grant in this type of situation and we are hopeful that the Court will agree to a rehearing or rehearing en banc.

Military-Veterans Advocacy is willing to pursue a petition for certiorari if no rehearing is granted or if the Court sustains the panel, The issue will be funding the printing costs. Hopefully sufficient funds can be raised.

The bottom line is this decision did not surprise us, although we would have preferred that the Court found jurisdiction and moved to the merits. However we do not consider this a huge legal setback, but rather a speed bump on the road to success.

Commander John B Wells USN (Retired)
Excursive Director
Military-Veterans Advocacy

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

More than 64,000 Veterans Apply for Veteran Designation on California Driver Licenses

Sacramento – In the two years since Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. signed legislation authorizing a VETERAN designation on California driver licenses and identification cards, more than 64,000 veterans have visited their County Veterans Service Office to apply and the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has issued more than 55,000. In the process, veterans learned about their eligibility for other benefits, and 28% applied for additional benefits. Thus far, an additional \$17 million has been awarded retroactively and \$31 million will be received by veterans statewide annually.

“There are 1.7 million veterans in California. Our hope is that each one of them has ready access to all of the benefits they have earned through their service to this country,” said CalVet Secretary Vito Imbasciani. “Getting

them into a County Veteran Service Office is the first step to ensuring they do.”

A veteran designation on a driver license or ID card recognizes military service and makes it easier for veterans who don't have a retired ID or a VA ID to access privileges and benefits without having to carry their military record with them. As an added bonus, a veteran designation means a business can easily confirm veteran status when offering discounts on holidays such as Veterans Day.

The DMV and CalVet have vigorously promoted this program in conjunction with the County Veterans Services Offices (CVSO), and veteran service organizations statewide. While the program has been a success, there are still hundreds of thousands of eligible veterans in California who don't know the program exists or are planning to participate when their current driver license is up for renewal.

Veterans can follow these three important steps to obtain their designation.

STEP 1 – Take your DD-214 to a CVSO to obtain a Veteran Status Verification Form (and check your eligibility for other benefits at the same time!) To find a local CVSO, call 844-737-8838 or visit www.calvet.ca.gov.

STEP 2 – [Go online](#) or call DMV at 800-777-0133 for an appointment to visit a DMV field office. Present the completed and stamped Veteran Status Verification Form

and driver license application to a DMV representative at your local DMV field office.

STEP 3 - Pay your \$5 designation fee and related application or renewal fees.

Veterans are required to pay a one-time \$5 designation fee, in addition to any other application fees associated with a renewal, duplicate, or original driver license and/or ID card. The designation fee is included in the legislative language contained within [Assembly Bill 935](#).

The CalVet and the California DMV wants to remind veterans that they must first obtain a Veteran Status Verification Form from a CVSO, BEFORE visiting a DMV field office to apply for the designation.

For more information, please visit CalVet's [website](#).

Links to Other Stories

- 1) [2018 National Defense Act Update](#)
- 2) [Army Veteran may receive \\$7.5 million from Walmart after taking spill in grocery aisle](#)
- 3) [Each Veteran has "Borne the Battle." VA's podcast shares their stories](#)
- 4) [Lubbock Rep. Arrington: VA is 'fundamentally broken right now'](#)

- 5) Marine Recruit Christmas Letter Project
- 6) Medical marijuana for PTSD part of legislation package supporting Vets
- 7) US Army to allow recruits with history of 'depression, self-mutilation, bipolar disorder, drug & alcohol abuse'
- 8) VA Prioritizes Improving Veterans' Access to Pro Bono Legal Services
- 9) VA Scheduling Now Available Online
- 10) VA to Host 2 Dozen Events Across Country to Reach Homeless and At-risk Veterans
- 11) Veteran Who Was Denied Care Decided To End His Life In VA Parking Lot
- 12) Veterans Choice Overbilled By 'Tens Of Millions,' Grand Jury Investigates
- 13) Video: Combat veterans make case for medical marijuana
- 14) Vietnam Veterans to Trump: 'We're All Behind You In Making America Great Again'
- 15) We have a duty to take care of our veterans, but we're letting them die
- 16) Years Before Vietnam, the Chemical Industry Knew About Dioxins

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



Second Chance to Register for Webinar on 2018 TRICARE Changes

The Military Health System is modernizing TRICARE to better serve you and respond to changes in law and policy. Join us for our next webinar on Monday, Nov. 20, from 1 to 2 p.m. (EDT) to learn how TRICARE is changing in 2018 and how to prepare for these changes.

Read the full article [here](#).



November Is Military Family Month

Military Family Month is celebrated every November; it recognizes and honors Military Families for their numerous contributions and daily sacrifices to the Army and the nation. The President of the United States has signed a [proclamation](#) declaring November as Military Family Month. Army Community Service Centers often host events and activities in observance of MFM. Additionally, Army public affairs offices assist in raising the awareness of this worthwhile celebration with communication products to reach targeted internal and external audiences. For more information, read the [U.S. Army Stand-To! article](#) and [Military.com's Family Appreciation Month section](#).



- 1) Child Well-Being: Key Considerations for Policymakers, Including the Need for a Federal Cross-Agency Priority Goal
 - 2) DATA Act: Audit of GAO's FY 2017, Second Quarter, DATA Act Submission
 - 3) Financial Audit: Bureau of the Fiscal Service's Fiscal Years 2017 and 2016 Schedules of Federal Debt
 - 4) Preventing Drug Abuse: Low Participation by Pharmacies and Other Entities as Voluntary Collectors of Unused Prescription Drugs
 - 5) Tobacco Trade: Duty-Free Cigarettes Sold in Unlimited Quantities on the U.S.-Mexico Border Pose Customs Challenges
-

**“We Proudly Support our
Military Personnel & Families”**

Caregiving Around the Clock

Being a caregiver for a veteran can bring be around-the-clock responsibilities. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is here to support you! VA's Caregiver Support Program offers a range of online courses, face-to face classes, telephone support, and peer mentoring to caregivers of Veterans from all eras. Learn more by visiting the VA Caregiver Support [website](#).

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.



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Riverside County, CA

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