



National Service & Legislative Headquarters
807 Maine Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024-2410
Phone (202) 554-3501
Fax (202) 554-3581
www.dav.org

October 15, 2012

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
United States Senator
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

As National Commander of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), I am pleased to inform you that you have been chosen to receive a DAV Congressional Leadership Award in recognition of the steadfast support and tireless efforts shown throughout your career to strengthen veterans' programs and enact new legislation to empower all of America's injured heroes to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

After being elected to the House of Representatives in 1990, you quickly established yourself as a reliable supporter of veterans, voting consistently to increase funding for veterans health care and benefits programs. Many of the very first bills you sponsored were to strengthen veterans benefits, including legislation to end the disabled veterans tax and to recognize service connection between Agent Orange exposure and numerous associated illnesses. Now serving in the Senate as a Member of both the Veterans' Affairs and Budget Committees, you have been a staunch advocate for making veterans funding a national priority. Your personal efforts led to important increases in funding for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) treatment, Gulf War Illness research and adaptive housing grants for seriously disabled veterans. Just this year, you sponsored legislation enacted into law that will significantly strengthen the Specially Adapted Housing and Special Home Adaptation programs for disabled veterans who need modifications to their homes, or to a family member's home where they are currently residing.

As an original cosponsor of the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, you played a key role in helping to enact advance appropriations for veterans health care, and you have consistently fought to support the funding targets established by The Independent Budget, which DAV co-authors. Even during the most difficult fiscal and budgetary times, you consistently champion veterans' interests as evidenced by amendments you offered to end the rounding down Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increases for disability compensation and provide \$250 checks to disabled veterans as part of the economic stimulus packages.

When veterans have needed your support, you have always stood up for them. On behalf of the 1.2 million members of DAV, I look forward to presenting you with a custom-made DAV baseball bat as our way of thanking you for going to bat for veterans.

Sincerely,


LARRY A. POLZIN
National Commander