

THE COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014

LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT OUR NATION'S VETERANS

The Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 is the result of bipartisan efforts – consisting of omnibus bills unanimously passed by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, bills passed out of Committee with strong bi-partisan support and new bills. This legislation responds to the needs of the veterans' community and issues raised by veterans and their organizations in numerous hearings and private meetings.

This legislation has the strong support of virtually every veterans organization in the country including The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA).

In its statement of support DAV writes:

“This massive omnibus bill, unprecedented in our modern experience, would create, expand, advance, and extend a number of VA benefits, services and programs that are important to DAV and to our members. For example, responding to a call from DAV as a leading veterans organization, it would create a comprehensive family caregiver support program for all generations of severely wounded, injured and ill veterans. Also, the bill would authorize advance appropriations for VA’s mandatory funding accounts to ensure that in any government shutdown environment in the future, veterans benefits payments would not be delayed or put in jeopardy. This measure also would provide additional financial support to survivors of service members who die in the line of duty, as well as expanded access for them to GI Bill educational benefits. A two-plus year stalemate in VA’s authority to lease facilities for health care treatment and other purposes would be solved by this bill. These are but a few of the myriad provisions of this bill that would improve the lives, health, and prospects of veterans—especially the wounded, injured and ill—and their loved ones.”

The Committee has received similar letters of support from dozens of other veterans organizations. For a complete list of these, [please visit the Committee’s website](#).

Included in this comprehensive legislation are provisions, such as the following, that would improve the lives of our Nation’s servicemembers, veterans and their survivors.

- ***Restoration of Full COLA for Military Retirees:*** This legislation would restore full cost-of-living adjustments for all military retirees.
- ***Authorization of Major Medical Facility Leases:*** This legislation would authorize VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 states and Puerto Rico.
- ***VA Health Care and Dental Care Expansion:*** This legislation includes provisions that would expand access to VA health care – including complementary and alternative medicine – and dental care, in a cost-effective and equitable way.
- ***Advanced Appropriations for VA:*** This legislation would ensure veterans receive consistent access to the benefits they have earned by establishing advanced appropriations for the mandatory accounts at VA.
- ***Ending the benefits backlog:*** Members from both sides of the aisle have presented legislative solutions (incorporated in this bill) that would support VA’s ongoing efforts and would make needed improvements to the claims system.
- ***In-State Tuition Assistance for Post-9/11 Veterans:*** This legislation would give our transitioning servicemembers a fair shot at attaining their educational goals without incurring an additional financial burden.
- ***Extension of Health Care Access for Recently Separated Veterans:*** This legislation would extend from five to ten years unfettered access to VA health care for recently separated veterans to address their health care needs early.

(additional items on the back)

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- ***Renew Our VOW to Hire Heroes:*** This legislation would reauthorize provisions from the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, including a two-year extension for the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program.
- ***Sexual Assault:*** This legislation contains important provisions that would improve the delivery of care and benefits to veterans who experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military, which were inspired by Ruth Moore who struggled for 23-years to receive VA disability compensation.
- ***Reproductive Health:*** This legislation would help female and male veterans who have suffered significant spinal cord, reproductive and urinary tract injuries start a family.
- ***Servicemembers Civil Relief Act:*** This legislation would enhance and improve the protections of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, which are of particular importance to members of the Reserve Components during periods of active military service.