

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
JOHN L. WILSON
ASSOCIATE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
OF THE
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
MAY 21, 2009**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the 1.2 million members of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), I am honored to present this testimony to address various bills before the Subcommittee today. In accordance with our congressional charter, the DAV's mission is to "advance the interests, and work for the betterment, of all wounded, injured, and disabled American veterans." We are therefore pleased to support various measures insofar as they fall within that scope.

H.R. 1982

The Veterans Entitlement to Service (VETS) Act of 2009, introduced by Representative Kilpatrick on April 21, 2009, directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Secretary) to acknowledge the receipt of any claim for medical services, disability compensation, or pension under the laws administered by the Secretary for Veterans Affairs, or other communication relating to such services, compensation, or pension, submitted to the Secretary by a veteran within 60 days of receiving the claim or other communication.

Although this legislation is well-intentioned, it is DAV's view that the VA already has practices and policies in place to communicate with veterans, their dependents and survivors. The VA sends letters to veterans, their dependents and survivors in response to compensation claims. Letters may be sent in reply to veterans, their dependents and survivors inquiries with VA Contact Centers. Letters are sent to veterans for each Notification of Disagreement that is received. Letters of transmittal are sent with each Statement of the Case and Supplemental Statement of the Case when new evidence is submitted.

In fiscal year 2008, the VA received in excess of nine million pieces of correspondence for all claims and other communications. It is our perspective that this bill, if enacted into law, would place an undue and unattainable goal on the VA and will greatly delay claims decisions. The DAV would rather continue the focus, in concert with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Veterans' Affairs Committees of the House and Senate, on ways to streamline the claims process.

H.R. 1522

The United States Cadet Nurse Corps Equity Act, introduced by Representative Lowet on March 16, 2009, seeks to provide that service of the members of the organization known as the United States Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II constituted active military service for purposes of laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

The DAV has no resolution on this bill. It also falls outside the scope of our organization's mission. However, we have no objection to its favorable consideration.

H.R. 2270

Benefits for Qualified World War II Veterans Act of 2009, was introduced by Congressman Buyer on May 6, 2009. It seeks to establish a compensation fund to make payments to qualified World War II veterans on the basis of certain qualifying service.

The DAV has no resolution on this bill. It also falls outside the scope of our organization's mission. However, we have no objection to its favorable consideration.