**[Date]**

**Contact:** [Name, phone number and/or email]

**Keeping a Promise**

When 200,000 wounded WWI veterans came home a century ago our nation gasped at the horror of injuries caused by mechanized and chemical warfare. Veterans returned missing arms and legs. They were blind, deaf, or mentally injured.

Many of these soldiers had been kept alive by improvements in medical technology, but the advancements made on the battlefield created a brutal reality—these veterans would require a lifetime of care.

Our government was not prepared for this truth. There was no single government program or agency like today’s Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) that could claim overall responsibility for the veterans.

From this horror and hardship came hope. In 1920, the Disabled American Veterans of the World War (now DAV—Disabled American Veterans) was founded and headed by WWI veteran and Cincinnati Judge Robert S. Marx.

Marx summed up the need for DAV by saying, “We had a common experience which bound us together, and we are out to continue through an organization of our own… an organization of us, by us and for us.”

A century later, medical improvements continue to save lives on the battlefield that would have been lost in previous wars. However, with veterans surviving combat related injuries at a higher rate it thrusts a significant responsibility onto our nation to provide support, services and benefits to wounded veterans when they come home.

When a young man or woman answers the call to serve, they are making a commitment—to our great nation, themselves, their branch of service and those they stand shoulder to shoulder with while in uniform.

In return, America made a commitment to all individuals who wore our country’s uniform: If, in the course of defending our ideals, they pay the ultimate sacrifice or are forever changed, we promise we will afford them or their survivors the opportunity to enjoy the American way of life they made possible.

Today’s veterans represent a smaller percentage of the population than we did a century ago. Our history tells us that as the trumpets fade, so can our national priorities. We have turned a great corner in terms of how we welcome home our veterans compared to how we treated them a generation ago. But if a century has taught us anything, it’s that the relationship between the public and the few who stand for its defense requires our constant vigilance.

As we mark our founding, we ask for your support and commitment to those who’ve served. We want all who appreciate the contributions of veterans to know that we are here to help you honor their sacrifices. Caring for our nation’s heroes is everyone’s responsibility and we owe them a lifetime of care and support. And with your continued resolve, we can continue the great push we’ve made to ensure our promises are kept in the century ahead.

Please visit [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org) to learn how you can get involved with DAV and help veterans today or email us locally at <EMAIL ADDRESS>!

**About DAV:** *DAV empowers veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. It is dedicated to a single purpose: fulfilling our promises to the men and women who served. DAV does this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America’s injured heroes on Capitol Hill; providing employment resources to veterans and their families and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life. DAV, a non-profit organization with* *more than 1 million veteran members, was founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932. Learn more at* [*www.dav.org*](http://www.dav.org)*.*

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