

# New bill offers expanded benefits



National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 will expand benefits for disabled veterans

Service-connected disabled veterans and their families will soon have access to certain new privileges—several of which have been long-standing DAV legislative priorities—under the recently signed John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019.

Beginning in January 2020, service-connected disabled veterans and their caregivers will be eligible to use base commissaries and some Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities on bases worldwide. In addition, veterans with a service-connected disability rated permanent and total are now eligible for travel on Department of Defense aircraft on a space available (Space-A) basis. Eligibility does not extend to spouses, significant others or caregivers, and those wishing to travel Space-A must have a DD Form 2765.

For more than a decade, DAV members have adopted national resolutions and advocated for enactment of federal legislation to extend these military-related benefits to disabled veterans.

“These policy changes have been important priorities for our

members for many years,” said National Commander Dennis Nixon. “For veterans whose ability to work is impacted by a service-connected disability, the cost savings associated with access to base commissaries and exchanges, Space-A flights, and military recreation facilities will be a significant benefit.”

Other notable provisions passed in the legislation include improvements to the Transition Assistance Program, which prepares transitioning service members for civilian life, including mandatory instruction on preparation for civilian employment, and eligibility for VA benefits and services. It also allows for transitioning service members to select two days of specific training of their choice.

This comprehensive bill also calls for more VA research on availability of long-term care options for veterans with combat-related disabilities.

Further details regarding implementation of these new benefits are expected to be released in September 2019.

“This is a hard-fought win for injured and ill veterans, and we’re glad to see these key legislative priorities finally come to fruition,” Nixon added.

Learn more

Visit [www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site](http://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site) for more information regarding Space-A travel. And stay up to date on this and other critical legislation impacting disabled veterans by joining DAV CAN (Commander’s Action Network) at [davcan.org](http://davcan.org).