



2018 Mid-Winter Conference

Benefits Protection
Team/Legislative
Workshop

Sunday, February 25,
2018

National Legislative Department



National Legislative Department

Joy J. Ilem, National Legislative Director

Adrian M. Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

Shurhonda Y. Love, Assistant National Legislative Director

Shane L. Liermann, Assistant National Legislative Director

Jeremy M. Villanueva, Associate National Legislative Director

Peter Dickinson, Senior Executive Advisor

Lisa Bogle, Sr. Legislative Support Specialist

Caren Wooley, Legislative Support Specialist



Reminders

Take Handouts

- Critical Policy Goals (big and small)
- FY 2019 IB Budget Document

Please Complete

- Legislative Hill Visit List /Headquarters Office (Alexandria Room)
- Feedback Forms – Return to NS&LH

Power Points will be posted on the Events section of the DAV website,
<https://www.dav.org/events/2018-mid-winter-conference/>

Commander's Legislative Presentation



**Tuesday, February 27, at 2:00 p.m.
Room G-50 Dirksen Senate Office Building**

***Doors open at 1:00 PM**

Commander's Presentation - Transportation

Wheelchair Accessible Transportation/Vehicles

- All Metro Stations/Trains are accessible.
- Uber - From Uber App, select UBER WAV or TAXI WAV
- Red Top Cab - Call 703-522-3333
- Yellow Cab - Call 202-544-1212

If you call one taxi cab company and their wheelchair taxis are busy, that Company will transfer your trip request to another company.

DAV 2018 Legislative Advocacy Awards

- Veterans' Champion Award - **Senator Johnny Isakson** (GA), Chairman, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee
- Outstanding Senate Legislator of the Year – **Senator Tammy Baldwin** (WI)
- Outstanding House Legislator of the Year – **Representative Tim Walz** (MN)
Ranking Member, House Veterans' Affairs Committee
- Outstanding Federal Executive of the Year **Thomas Murphy**, VA Acting Under Secretary for Benefits



DAV 2018 Special Recognition Awards

- **Dahlia Melendrez**, General Counsel, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee
- **Ray Kelley**, Minority Staff Director, House Veterans' Affairs Committee
- **Dr. Elizabeth Yano**, Senior Research Scientist, VA HSR&D Service
- **Dr. Frances Murphy**, MD, MPH, Chief Executive Officer, Sigma Health Consulting
- **Tom Philpott**, Syndicated Columnist

National Legislative Interim Committee

- Al Labelle, Chairman
- Jim Procunier
- Mark Aaron
- Kevin Dasing

DAV 2018 Critical Policy Goals

- Strengthen and Modernize the **VA Health Care** System
- Support Sufficient **Funding** for Veterans Benefits and Health Care
- Comprehensive Support for **Caregivers** of Veterans of All Eras
- Improve Services and Recognition for **Women Veterans**
- **Defending Our Benefits** and Protecting Our Future



Thank You!

Joy J. Ilem
National Legislative Director
jilem@dav.org

2018 Mid-Winter Conference



Strengthen and Reform the VA Health Care System

Peter Dickinson

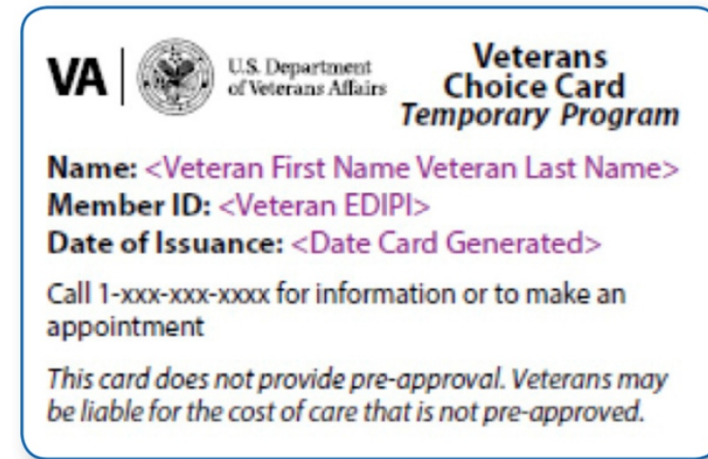
Senior Executive Advisor

Background of VA Health Care Reform



Background of VA Health Care Reform

- 2014 Access Crisis & Waiting List Scandal
- VACAA – Veterans Choice Program
- History of Funding “Mismatch”
- Commission on Care
- DAV & IB Framework for Reform



“Setting the Record Straight”

THE HILL

‘Centers of Excellence’ for veterans; far from
an excellent idea

By Garry J. Augustine

WHY IS
HAVING THE VA TREAT
ONLY SERVICE-RELATED
OR COMBAT INJURIES
A BAD IDEA?

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Putting “Choice” in Context

CHOICE A PART
MUST BE

OF THE SOLUTION
TO FIXING VETERANS HEALTH CARE

DAV

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Choice Improvement and Extension

- Veterans Choice Program (VACAA) Originally Set to End After 3 Years (August 2017) or When Money Runs Out
- Congress Passed Fixes, Removed End Date & Added Funding to Continue “Temporary” Choice Program
- Summer ‘17 Extension Battle Over New VA Investment

VA CARE Legislation

- CARE = Community Access for Rewarding Experiences
- RFP to Create a New Integrated Choice Network
- Veterans Get Access to Choice Network When:
 - Medical Service Not Available at VA Facility
 - Determined in the Best Clinical Interest of Veteran
 - Underperforming Service Line at VA Facility

H.R. 4242: VA Care in our Community Act

- Approved by HVAC with 14 to 9 vote on December 19
- Creates Integrated Networks using Market Assessments
- All Veterans Assigned Primary Care Provider (PCP)
 - If VA PCP Not Available, Veterans Chooses Community PCP
- **NO** New Investment in VA Infrastructure
- **NO** Caregiver Expansion Provisions

S. 2193: Caring for our Heroes Act

- Bipartisan Legislation (Chairman Isakson & Sen. Tester)
 - Passed Senate VA Committee by 14 to 1 Vote on November 29, 2017
 - Strongly Supported by DAV and All Major VSOs
- VA Creates Integrated Community Care Network
 - Clinical Determinations Based on VA Access Guidelines
 - Service Line Quality Triggers Access & Facility Remediation Plan
- Includes Significant New Investment in VA
- Contains Caregiver Expansion Provision

McCain-Moran Bill (S. 2184)

- Drafted by Sen. McCain & Moran to Open Up Choice
 - VA Creates Fixed Access Standards by Regulation
- **NO** New Investment in VA Infrastructure
- **NO** Caregiver Expansion Provisions
- Offered as Amendment to S. 2193
 - Defeated by Senate VA Committee Vote
 - Introduced as Separate Bill Following SVAC Markup

White House Involvement

- Senators Moran & McCain Placed Hold on S. 2193
- White House Seeking to Broker New Agreement
- White House Issued Comments in January
 - Supported Regulating Access Standards for Choice
 - Opposed Quality Standards for Community Providers
 - Opposed Caregiver Expansion Without New Funding

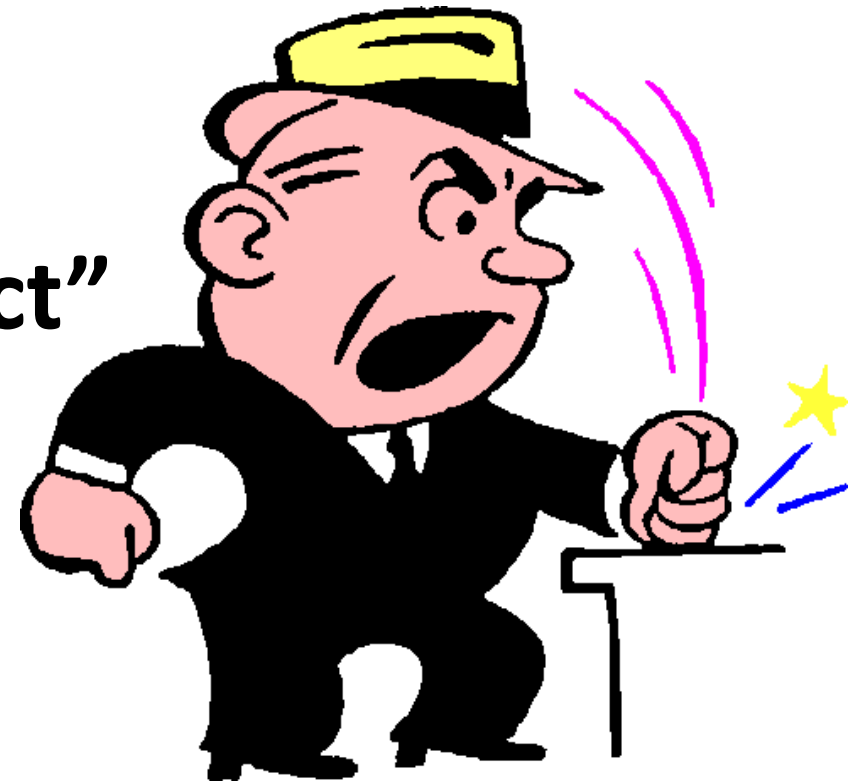
What Lies Ahead?

- Senate-House Compromise on VA Health Reform & Choice Legislation
- “Choice” Legislation Could Be Part of Next FY 2018 Budget Deal
- Fate of Caregiver Expansion Provisions in “Choice” Legislation



What We Want From Congress

- Protect the VA Health Care System
- Support the Senate VA Committee Bill **S. 2193, “Caring for our Veterans Act”**
 - Must Keep Caregiver Expansion
 - Must Invest in IT, Infrastructure & Staff
- Congress Must **FULLY FUND** the VA Health Care System Every Year





Peter Dickinson
Senior Executive Advisor
pdickinson@dav.org



2018 Mid-Winter Conference

Sufficient Funding for Veterans Benefits and Health Care

Adrian Atizado
**Deputy National
Legislative Director**

Agenda

- State of Play
- Independent Budget Recommendations

State of Play



For FY 2018

- **\$3.4** Billion Shortfall

Two-year Budget Deal

- For what exactly?

FY 2019 IB Recommendation: Veterans Health Administration

Total VA Medical Care: **\$82.6 billion** *+ \$6.6 B over Admin*

- Care in the Community: **\$14.8 billion** *+ \$4.5 B over Admin*
- VA Healthcare system: **\$67.9 billion** *+ \$5.6 B over Admin*

FY 2019 IB Recommendation: Veterans Benefits Administration

+ \$235 M over Admin

VBA: \$3.1 billion

- Compensation Service - 900 new FTEE
- VR&E Service Personnel - 143 new FTEE



"I'll ask someone else. Didn't realize you were still dealing with that backlog."

FY 2019 IB Recommendation: Construction Program

*+ \$652 M
over Admin*

FY 2019 VA Construction: **\$2.5 billion**

+ \$602 M

- Major Construction: **\$1.73 billion**

+ \$54 M

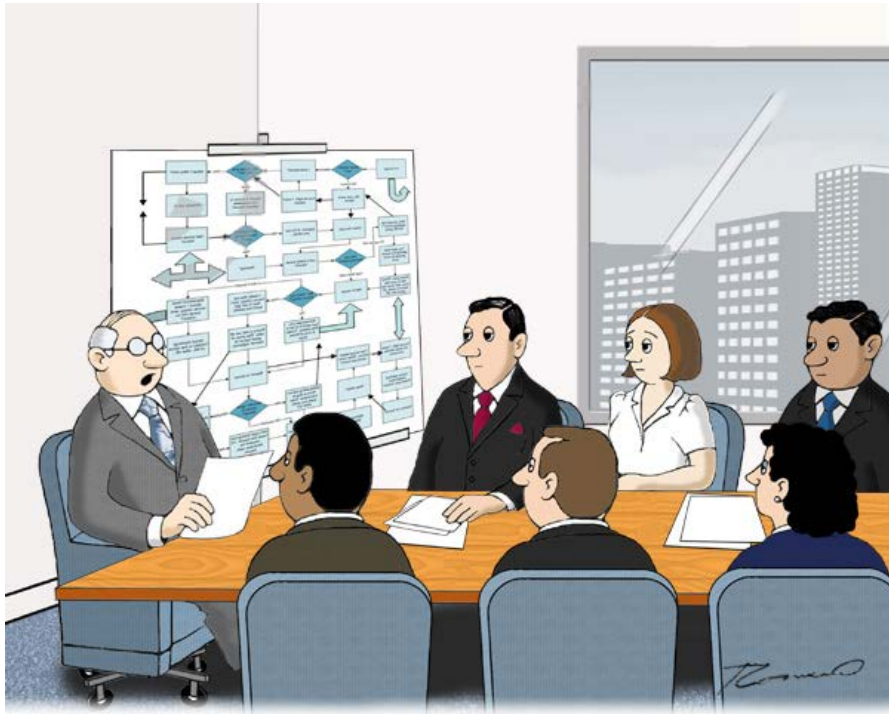
- Minor Construction: **\$761 million**



FY 2019 IB Recommendation: Electronic Medical Record Modernization

**+ \$393 M
over Admin**

FY 2019 EMR Replacement: \$1.6 billion



Copyright © 2011 R.J. Romero.

"We need to be efficient and keep costs down in implementing our Electronic Health Record system. So, what shall we throw at it - more money or more meetings?"

In Short...

- FY 2018 – Short fall of **\$3.4 billion**
- FY 2019 – VA's total discretionary budget
\$96 billion

2018 CRITICAL POLICY GOAL

**Sufficient Funding for Veterans Benefits
and Health Care**



2018 Mid-Winter Conference

Comprehensive Support for Caregivers of Veterans of All Eras

Adrian Atizado
**Deputy National
Legislative Director**

2017 Legislative Activities

- April - Roundtable



2017 Legislative Activities

- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591



DAV 2017 Family Caregiver Survey: If you are a family member, relative or friend who provides care or assistance to a disabled veteran, or you are a disabled veteran who has a family member, relative or friend who provides care and assistance to you, please participate! If not, please share!

Advocacy Campaigns Find Your Officials Bills Sign Up to Receive Alerts!

May 2017 Family Caregiver Survey

In order to help DAV better understand and advocate for the needs of all caregivers of disabled veterans, please complete the survey below. You can answer the questions whether you are a family member, relative or friend who provides care or assistance to a disabled veteran, or you are a disabled veteran who has a family member, relative or friend who provides care and assistance to you. Thank you.

*1. Are you currently helping to care for or assist a disabled veteran who is a family member, relative or friend, or are you a veteran receiving care or assistance from a family member, relative or friend?

-- Choose One --

*2. What is the relationship of the caregiver to the disabled veteran who is receiving care and assistance?

-- Choose One --

3. What types of care or assistance are provided by the caregiver to the veteran? Please choose all that apply.

☐ Help with bathing and dressing

☐ Prepare and serve food and meals

☐ Coordinate health care services and medications, including transportation to appointments

☐ Provide direct medical care or treatments

☐ Provide supervision or protection due to neurological or mental disorders (e.g., TBI, dementia)

☐ Manage money and finances

☐ Shopping and home maintenance

☐ Other types of help and assistance

*4. For approximately how many years has the family caregiver been providing care or assistance to the disabled

2017 Family Caregiver Survey

In order to help DAV better understand and advocate for the needs of all caregivers of disabled veterans, please complete the survey below.

DAV



Like



Comment



Share

2017 Legislative Activities

- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591
- May - DAV caregiver survey



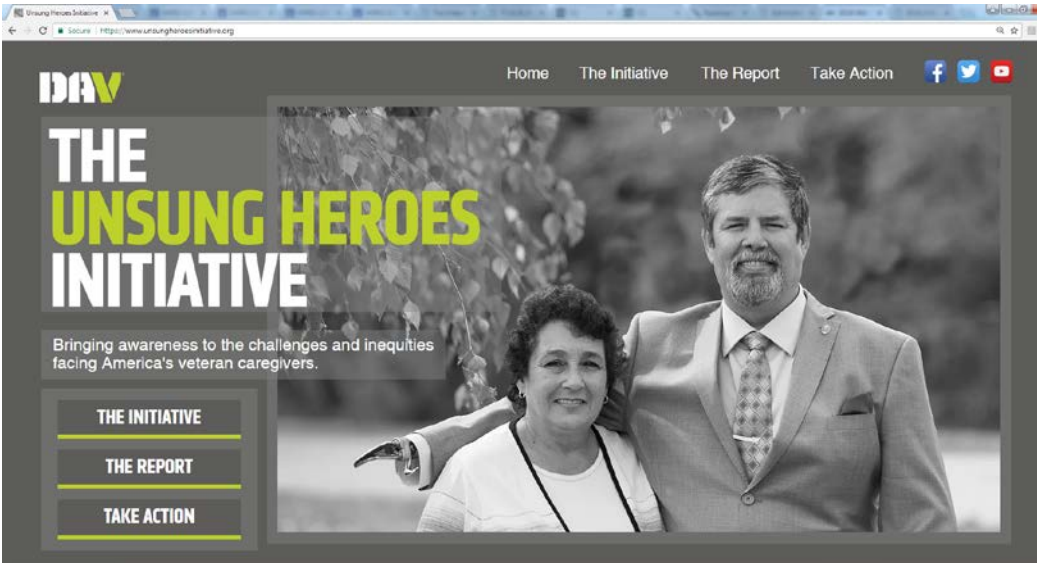
2017 Legislative Activities

- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591
- May - DAV caregiver survey
- June - 43 Org letter



2017 Legislative Activities

www.unsungheroesinitiative.org



- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591
- May - DAV caregiver survey
- June - 43 Org letter
- June - **Unsung Heroes** Initiative launch

Unsung Heroes Initiative



Unsung Heroes Initiative

TASK & PURPOSE

Millions Of Disabled Veterans Don't Have Access To VA Caregiver Support

By JAMES CLARK on June 19, 2017

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

PowerPost • Perspective

Law makes VA treat some family caregivers better than others

By Joe Davidson June 19, 2017 [Email the author](#)

MilitaryTimes

PROUD TO SERVE THOSE WHO SERVE.™

Pentagon & Congress

Survey: Veteran caregivers feel isolated, need more support

By: Leo Shane III  June 19, 2017




Veterans caregivers are unsung heroes who need equal benefits

BY DAVID W. RILEY, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR - 06/21/17 06:00 PM EDT

DAV
June 19, 2017 · 🌐

DAV is at the U.S. Capitol this morning to launch our Unsung Heroes Initiative to push Congress to enact legislation to provide comprehensive caregiver benefits to veterans of all eras. Follow our panel discussion live on our Periscope channel, @DAVHQ. Make sure to check out our initiative and how you can help at www.unsungheroesinitiative.org



UNSUNG HEROES
Challenges and inequities facing
America's veteran caregivers

Unsung Heroes Initiative - Caregiver Report

Help veterans correct an enormous inequity in veterans benefits by signing the petition to grant caregiver benefits to all caregivers regardless of service era.

UNSUNG HEROES INITIATIVE

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

2017 Legislative Activities

- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591
- May - DAV caregiver survey
- June - 43 Org letter
- June - **Unsung Heroes** Initiative launch

Sign the petition! Let's work to get equality for all caregivers across all generations.



Department of Veteran Affairs: Expand comprehensive caregiver benefits to severely disabled veterans of all generations

CHANGE.ORG

See who else is talking about this petition

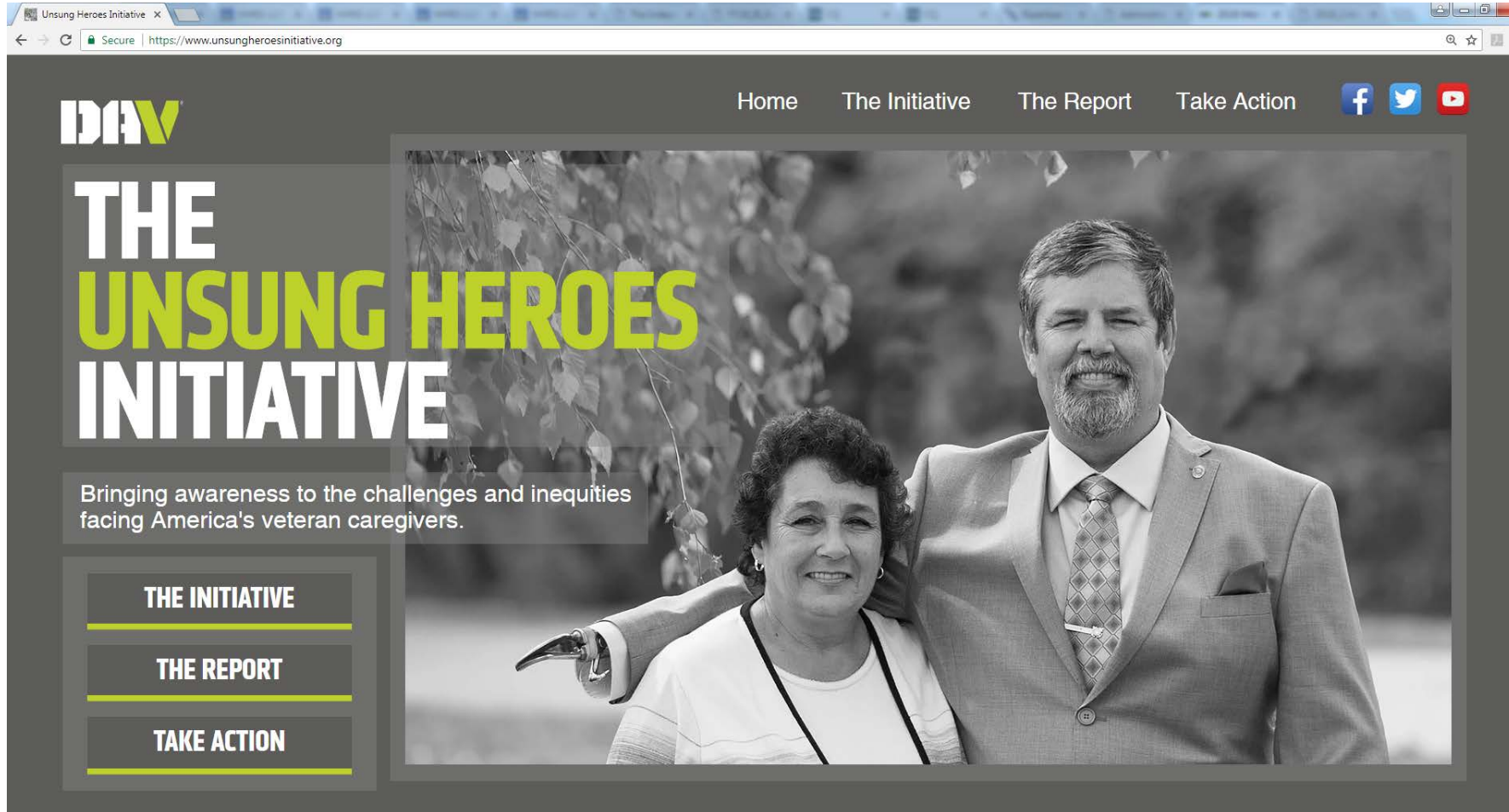
See Posts



2017 Legislative Activities

- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591
- May - DAV caregiver survey
- June - 43 Org letter
- June - **Unsung Heroes** Initiative launch

www.unsungheroesinitiative.org



Unsung Heroes Initiative

Secure | https://www.unsungheroesinitiative.org/the-initiative

HomeThe InitiativeThe ReportTake Action

DAV

0:02 / 3:12

CC

YouTube

THE UNSUNG HEROES INITIATIVE

Family caregivers are one of the most critical components of a severely disabled veteran's recovery and rehabilitation, helping them live to their highest potential. Yet the American public is largely unaware of the sacrifices these men and women make on a daily basis.

The Unsung Heroes Initiative is DAV's national campaign to bring awareness to the selfless service of the nation's veteran caregivers, as well as the many unique challenges - and in some cases, inequities - they face.

CAREGIVER STATISTICS

Who cares for America's severely disabled veterans? According to DAV's 2017 Veteran Family Caregiver Survey, the following breakdown represents the makeup of today's veteran caregiver population.

30% have been caregivers for 10 years or more

26% have been caregivers between 5 to 9 years

23% have been a caregiver between 3 to 4 years

18% have been a caregiver between 1 to 2 years

4% have been a caregiver for 1 year or less

How long caregivers have served

84.3% female

15.7% male

Gender (Pre-9/11)

91.2% female

8.8% male

Gender (Post-9/11)

78.8% spouse

8.5% child

6.6% friend


1.9% parent

2.0% sibling


2.5% other

Relationship to veteran


MEET AMERICA'S UNSUNG HEROES




Ray & Pat Dempsey




Alexis & Jason Courmeen




Dave & Yvonne Riley



Dennis & Donna Joyner



Brad & Donna Barton



Mary Ann Keckler

Unsung Heroes Initiative

Secure | https://www.unsungheroesinitiative.org/take-action

HomeThe InitiativeThe ReportTake Action

DAV

AMERICA'S UNSUNG HEROES: CHALLENGES AND INEQUITIES FACING VETERAN CAREGIVERS

For millions of veterans who have suffered injury or illness in service to our nation, it is often a family member or friend steps in at the most critical moment to take on the role of caregiver; some occasionally, other on a full-time basis.

Currently, some research exists on caregiving in general, as well as some specifically looking at military veterans' caregivers, though primarily for veterans injured on or after September 11, 2001. However, a large percentage of veterans currently needing caregiver assistance were injured prior to that date, and their voices must be heard.


In order to better understand veteran caregivers of all eras, DAV conducted a qualitative online survey of self-identified veterans and caregivers. The results of the DAV survey gives a deeper look at the challenges all veteran caregivers face, as well as the supports they receive and could use to help care for their loved ones. By comparing and combining our findings with other surveys and research on caregivers, this report provides a clearer picture of the lives of veterans' caregivers in order to guide critical public policy changes in the coming years.

CAREGIVERS TALK

Each of these veterans was severely injured in service to our country before 9/11.

YouTube

THE REPORT



KEY REPORT FINDINGS

\$37K, annual cost to support a family caregiver

\$333K, annual cost VA nursing home

\$88K, annual cost community nursing home

\$45K, annual cost of state veterans home (per diem)

41% health & wellbeing

43.8% family & home life

25.7% Would need immediate institutional care

52.7% financial security

29.4% school & education

25% Could live independently

46% friends & social life

48.3% work & career

49.3% Would need future institutional care

Reported significant negative impact of caregiving on personal goals or experiences

Veteran without caregiver assistance

DAV®

2017 Legislative Activities



- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591
- May - DAV caregiver survey
- June - 43 Org letter
- June - **Unsung Heroes**
- Dec - S. 2193 passed



2017 Legislative Activities

- April - Roundtable
- May - Hearing on S. 591
- May - DAV caregiver survey
- June - 43 Org letter
- June - **Unsung Heroes**
- Dec - S. 2193 passed
- Dec - Petition delivered



2018 Legislative Activities

- February – House oversight
 - VA proposal
- *March – Roundtable*
 - *Legislation?*



State of Play

114th Congress:

- No VA proposal
- S. 425/S. 2921 passed Senate VA Committee
- No bills passed House VA Committee

115th Congress:

- VA expansion proposal ✓
- S. 2193 passed Senate VA Committee ✓
- H.R. ????? Committee draft



OPERATION: **KEEP THE PROMISE**

DAV | 2018

DAV's Critical Policy Goals for 2018

1. Comprehensive Support for Caregivers of Veterans of All Eras
2. Strengthen and Modernize the VA Health Care System
3. Defending Our Benefits and Protecting Our Future
4. Improve Services and Recognition for Women Veterans
5. Support Sufficient Funding for Veterans Benefits and Health Care

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; assisting them with employment; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; 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 members, was founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932.

Rev. 2/18

2018 CRITICAL POLICY GOAL

Comprehensive Support for Caregivers of Veterans of All Eras





Adrian Atizado
Deputy National
Legislative Director

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2018 Mid-Winter Conference

Improve Services & Recognition For Women Veterans

**Shurhonda Love
Assistant National
Legislative Director**



Discussion Topics

Purpose

About last year

Todays Challenges

Women Veteran Bills 115th Congress

Veteran Suicide

Women Veteran Homelessness

DAV Web Resources

DAV Interim Women Veterans Committee

DAV In Action



Why are we here?

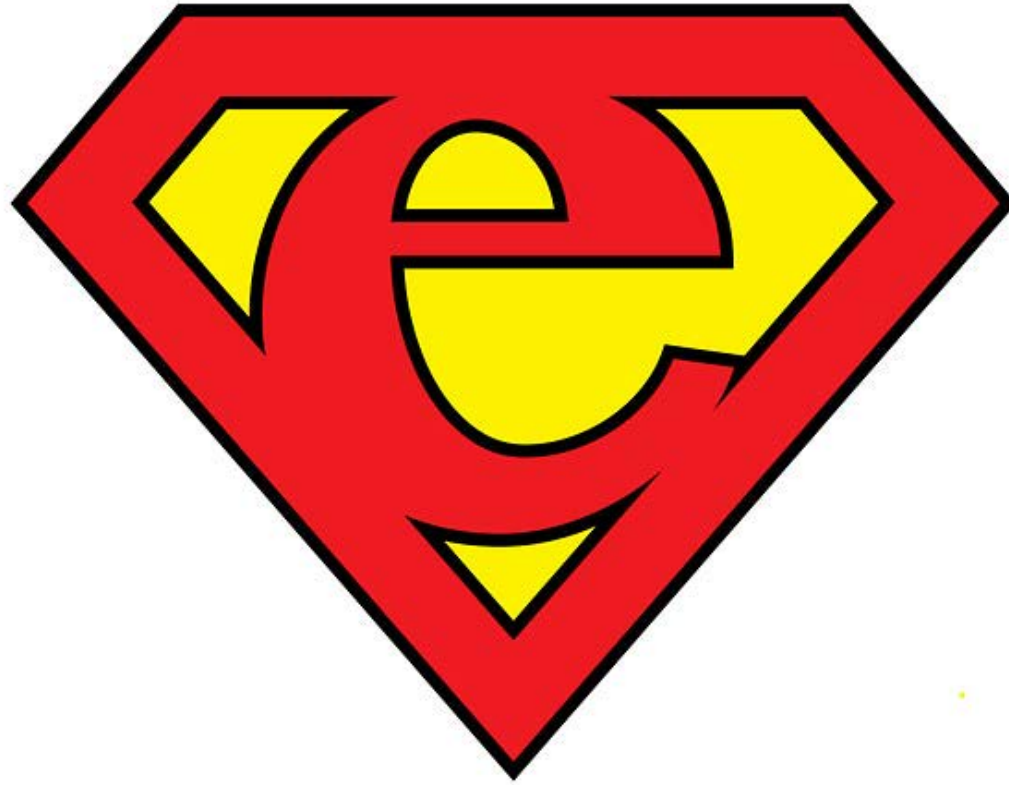


Why are YOU here?

Engage

Educate

Expect



Action

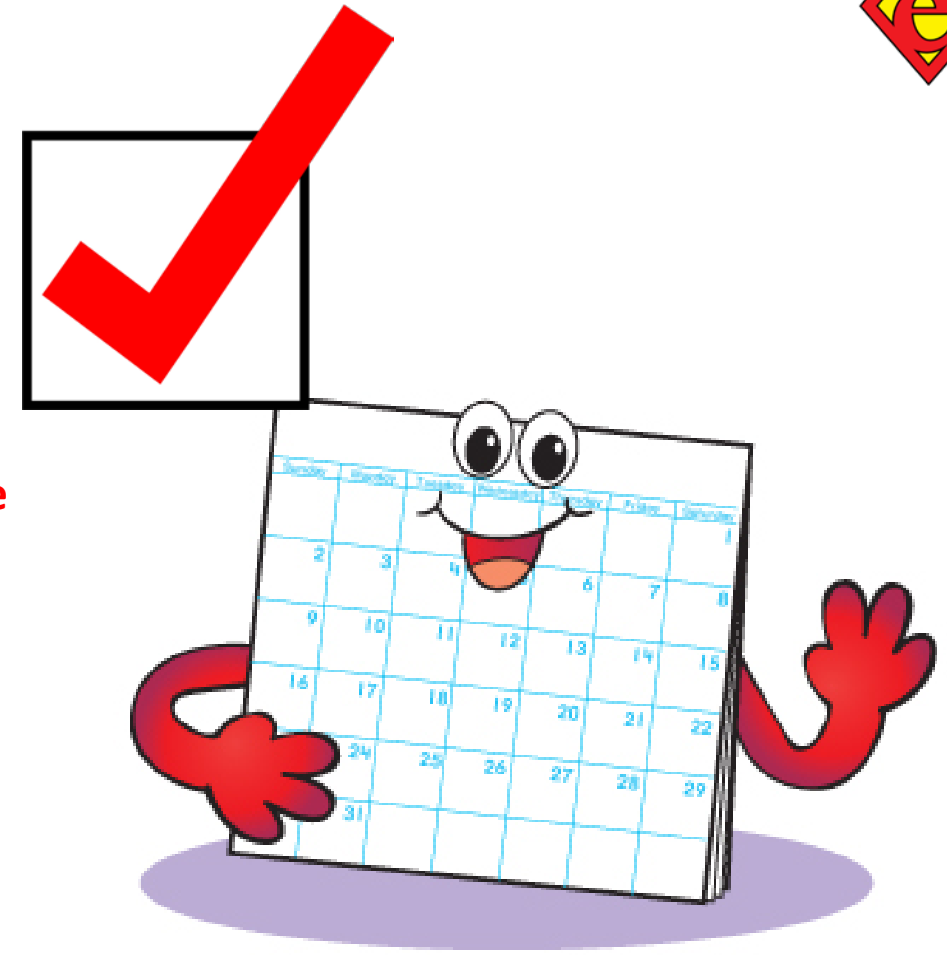
**Locally
Elected
Officials**

**DAV's
Legislative
Priorities**



Last Year

- **Women Veterans inability to identify as veterans & society's perception of who a veteran is**
VA and DOD Cant do it alone, because you are here, you know the challenges women veterans face. We need you to educate your neighbors, friends and family members. Remind them to acknowledge the service of women veterans as the same as male veterans.
- **Gaps in comprehensive care for women veterans**
VA is set to provide gender-specific training to many of its existing primary care physicians lacking this specialty qualification.
- **Lack of knowledge about benefits and services**
Women Veteran Coordinators are located at every regional office and Women Veteran Program Managers are located at every VAMC.



Awareness Campaigns



she
wore
these.

It's **our job** to give **her**
the best care anywhere.




WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

Women Veterans and
Military Sexual Trauma
You are not alone.

DEPRESSION
TROUBLE SLEEPING
WEIGHT CHANGE
ANXIETY
PHYSICAL PAIN
MEMORY LOSS

**Take the step...
Let VA help.**

★ You served, you deserve the best care anywhere ★
Department of Veterans Affairs | learn more at www.womenhealth.va.gov

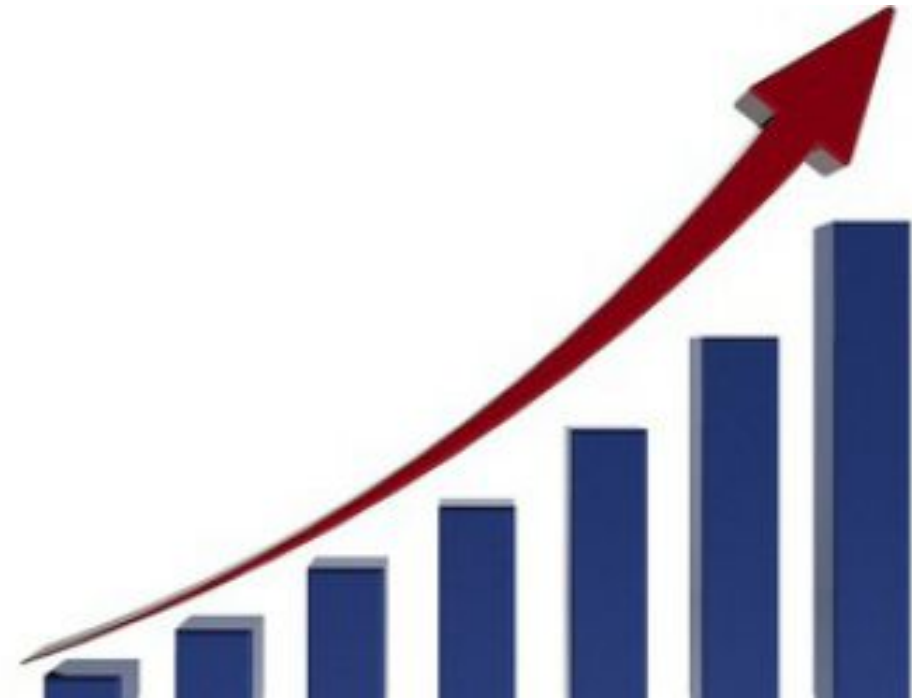




Today's Challenges



There are approximately 2 million women veterans. In 2015, almost 40% of women veterans were enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration.



The number of women veterans is expected to increase at the rate of 18,000 per year for the next 10 years.

Today's Challenges



From 2005 to 2015, the number of women veterans enrolled in VA health care increased by 83.9 percent. Going from 397,024 to **729,989** with actual users during this same period increasing from 237,952 to **455,875**.

What do these numbers mean?

- rapid growth
- unique cohort (requiring gender specific care)
- aging infrastructure





Team DAV



3 e's in action

DAV's Critical Policy Goals for 2018

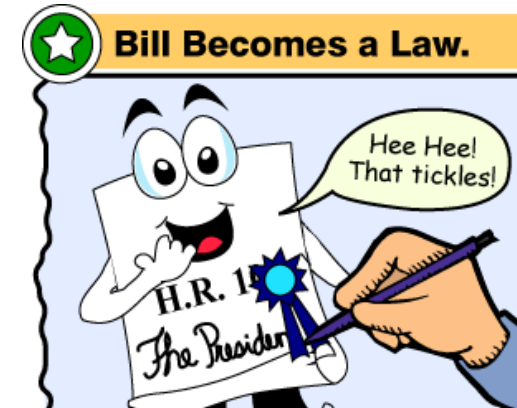
1. Comprehensive Support for Caregivers of Veterans of All Eras
2. Strengthen and Modernize the VA Health Care System
3. Defending Our Benefits and Protecting Our Future
4. Improve Services and Recognition for Women Veterans
5. Support Sufficient Funding for Veterans Benefits and Health Care
(Awaiting Release of Administration's Budget Proposal)



Engage



Educate

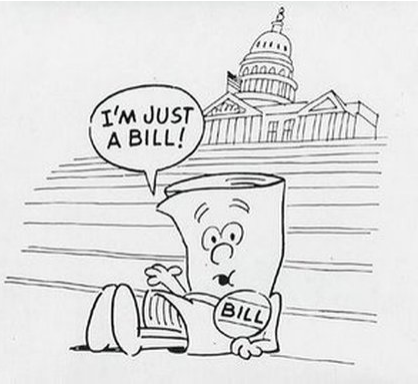


Expect

4. Improve Services and Recognition for Women Veterans

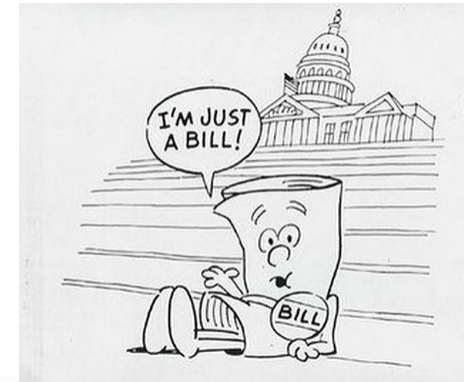


The 115th Congress



Women Veterans:

- H.R. 91, Building Supportive Networks for Women Veterans Act
- H.R. 93, A bill to improve access to gender-specific care for women
- H.R. 95, Veterans Access to Child Care Act
- S. 681/H.R. 2452, Deborah Sampson Act
- S. 804, Women Veterans Access to Quality Care Act of 2017
- S. 970/H.R. 907, Newborn Care Improvement Act of 2017
- S. 1111, Violence Against Women Veterans Act
- S. 2402/H.R. 4635, Peer to Peer Counseling Act



S. 681/H.R. 2452 The Deborah Sampson Act

To improve benefits and services provided by VA for women veterans



Peer to Peer Counseling



Legal Support Services



Reintegration counseling in group retreat settings



Increased Funding to Organizations supporting Women Veterans



Retrofit VAMCs with items which provide privacy and enhance the environment of care.



Report on the availability of Women veterans' prosthetics.



Collect data from VA programs serving women



Women Veteran Suicide



The risk for suicide was 2.4 times higher among women veterans when compared to U.S. civilian adult females. (2014)



From 2001 through 2014, the suicide rate among women veterans increased to a greater degree (62.4%) than the suicide rate among male veterans at (29.7%)

In 2014, the rate of suicide among U.S. Veteran females was 18.9 per 100,000. • Since 2001, the age-adjusted rate of suicide among U.S. Veteran females has increased by 85.2%.



Veteran Suicide

In 2014, an average of 20 veterans died by suicide each day.

NOTE: 14 of the 20 veterans dying by suicide are not recent users of VHA services at least within the past two years.



In 2014, veterans accounted for 18 percent of all deaths by suicide among U.S. adults and constituted 8.5 percent of the U.S. adult population (ages 18 and older).

In one year $365 \times 20 = 7,300$

In 35 years $7,300 \times 35 = 255,500$



Women Veteran Homelessness

January 2017, 40,056 veterans were experiencing homelessness. Around 36,302 were male, and around 3,752 were women. These numbers are determined by Point In Time counts conducted on a night during a month.

AHAR 2017 Report (52)



Between 2010 and 2017, the number of veterans experiencing homelessness was cut nearly in half.

955 were veterans who were homeless as part of a family.

According to the AHAR report to Congress, since 2016, the number of homeless women veterans increased by 7%



What Has DAV Done for Women Veterans

Congressional Testimony



2017 Women Veteran Summit



In 2014 DAV released the report: *Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home*



Major Sponsor



Update Expected
Summer 2018!

<https://www.dav.org/women-veterans/>



DAV Sponsor's 1st WV PATHH

Progressive and Alternative Training for Healing Heroes



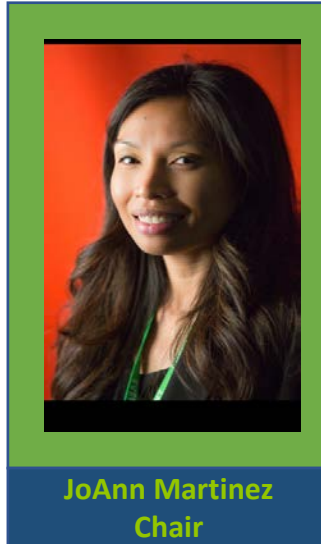
We learned the wisdom “it’s not you, but it’s what happened to you”

The curriculum is set up in a way that fosters a non-traditional, non-medicinal approach to treating post-traumatic stress, depression, and anxiety by taking those life and military experiences that are at the root of mental illnesses like post-traumatic stress and turning them into Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG). The philosophy of PTG is making peace with the past, living in the present, and planning for a new future.

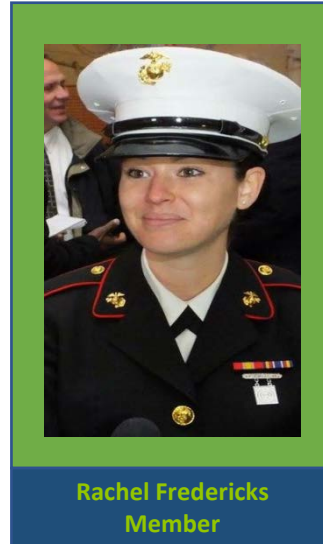
BCR showed me I can be stronger because of my experiences, not in spite of them.... “Stephanie” WP032



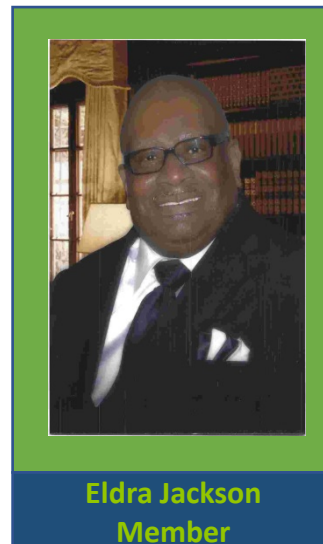
DAV Interim Women Veterans Committee



JoAnn Martinez
Chair



Rachel Fredericks
Member



Eldra Jackson
Member



Helen Bennett
Member



Shurhonda Love
Advisor

**Serve as Committee Advisors to the DAV
National Commander and National Adjutant
on issues affecting women veterans.**



DAV Women Veterans Landing Page


VETERANS
Need Claims Help?

MEMBERSHIP
Join, Log In, Shop

LEARN MORE
Learn About Our Mission

HELP DAV
Support, Volunteer, Advocate


DONATE NOW



Click here for the infographic

Women transitioning from military to civilian life have different needs, face different challenges than their male counterparts. They have, for example, higher rates of unemployment and PTSD symptoms and, of course, very different physical health needs than men. Yet, as DAV documented in its landmark report, *The Long Journey Home*, the system that awaits them is a disjointed patchwork of programs marked by serious gaps in health care, housing, other community support services, employment and efforts to eradicate sexual assault. They are being put at risk by a system designed for and dominated by men.

Whether it's testifying on Capitol Hill, urging Congress to take action now to ensure women veterans are given every chance to succeed in civilian life, or working directly with them to help get the services and support they need, DAV is a tireless advocate on behalf of women who have served.



The research reveals that America's more than 300,000 women veterans are put at risk by a system designed for and dominated by male veterans.

[DOWNLOAD PDF](#)

"DAV has been leading the way, fighting for women veterans, for decades, including co-convening the first-ever national summit on women veterans, providing specialized training to all of our national service officers on issues unique to women veterans, and hiring unprecedented numbers of female field staff," said Joy J. Ilem, DAV's national legislative director and a disabled veteran herself.

DAV HELPING WOMEN VETERANS
Learn how DAV supports women veterans.

WHEN WOMEN COME HOME
Read more about the challenges women face after military life.

TOOLKIT
Department: Women Veterans Committee Toolkit

CURRENT LEGISLATION

ISSUE BRIEF

<https://www.dav.org/women-veterans/>



VETERANS

Need Claims Help?

MEMBERSHIP

Join, Log In, Shop

LEARN MORE

Learn About Our Mission

HELP DAV

Support, Volunteer, Advocate

DONATE NOW



Click here for the infographic

Women transitioning from military to civilian life have different needs, face different challenges than their male counterparts. They have, for example, higher rates of unemployment and PTSD symptoms and, of course, very different physical health needs than men. Yet, as DAV documented in its landmark report, *The Long Journey Home*, the system that awaits them is a disjointed patchwork of programs marked by serious gaps in health care, housing, other community support services, employment and efforts to eradicate sexual assault. They are being put at risk by a system designed for and dominated by men.

Whether it's testifying on Capitol Hill, urging Congress to take action now to ensure women veterans are given every chance to succeed in civilian life, or working directly with them to help get the services and support they need, DAV is a tireless advocate on behalf of women who have served.



The research reveals that America's more than 300,000 women veterans are put at risk by a system designed for and dominated by male veterans.

DOWNLOAD PDF

"DAV has been leading the way, fighting for women veterans, for decades, including co-convening the first-ever national summit on women veterans, providing specialized training to all of our national service officers on issues unique to women veterans, and hiring unprecedented numbers of female field staff," said Joy J. Ilem, DAV's national legislative director and a disabled veteran herself.

DAV HELPING
WOMEN VETERANS

Learn how DAV supports women veterans.

WHEN WOMEN
COME HOME

Read more about the challenges women face after military life.

TOOLKIT

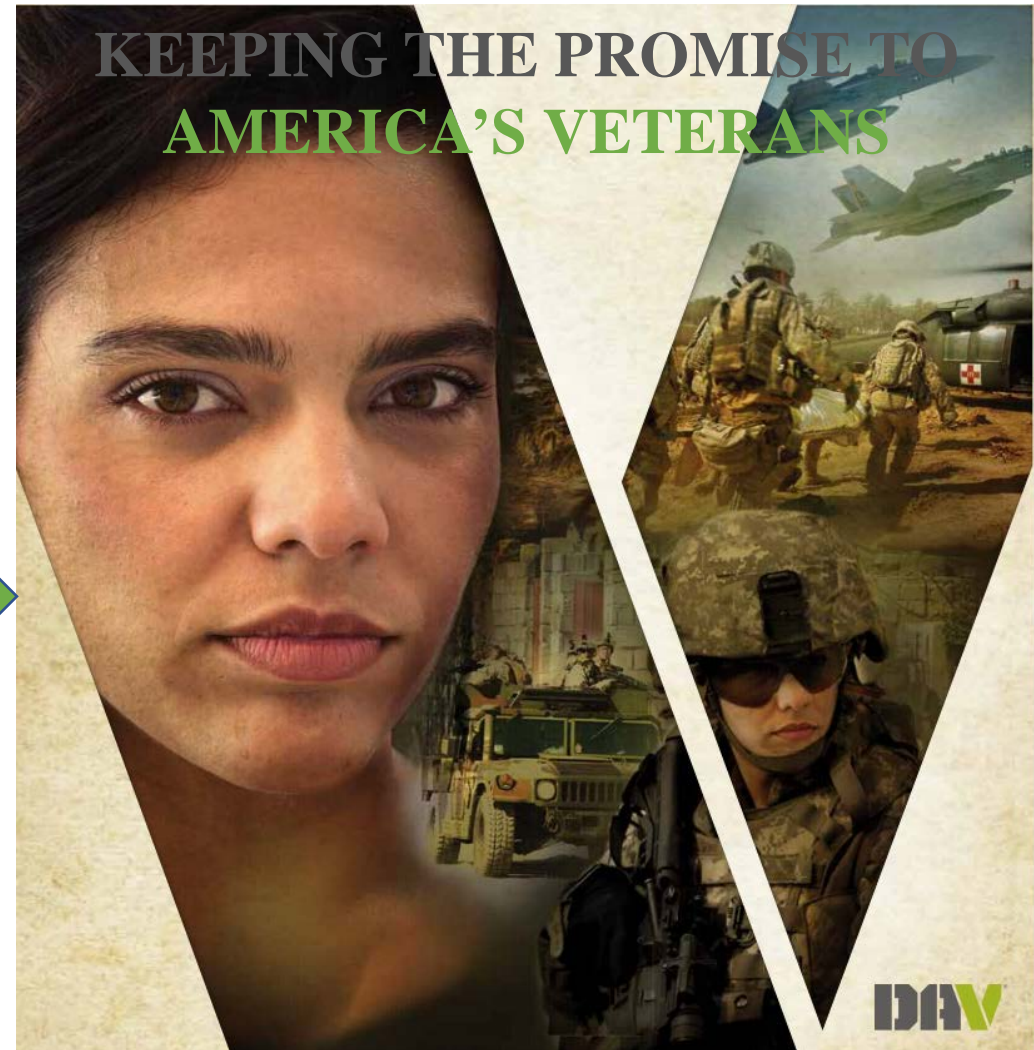
Department: Women Veterans Committee Toolkit



CURRENT
LEGISLATION

ISSUE BRIEF

<https://www.dav.org/women-veterans/>



DAV®



DAV Women Veterans & Grass Roots

DAV Benefits Protection Team

Protecting our Benefits Begins With You



Please sign up for the DAV Commander's Action Network to find out the latest on women veterans and other legislation supported by DAV

DAV Commander's Action Network

[Home](#) > [DAV Commander's Action Network](#)

Advocacy Campaigns

Find Your Officials

Bills

Sign Up to Receive Alerts!

Enter Your Info

[Privacy Policy](#)

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ZIP Code

Continue



DAV Women Veterans & Social Media



facebook



twitter



Snapchat



Instagram

@DAVHQ

@DAVSLove

#DAVMidWinter18

#DAVMWC18

#DAVWomenVeterans18

#DAVWV18





Thank You!

Shurhonda Love

Assistant National Legislative

Director

slove@dav.org



2018 Mid-Winter Conference

Defending Our Benefits

Shane Liermann

Assistant National

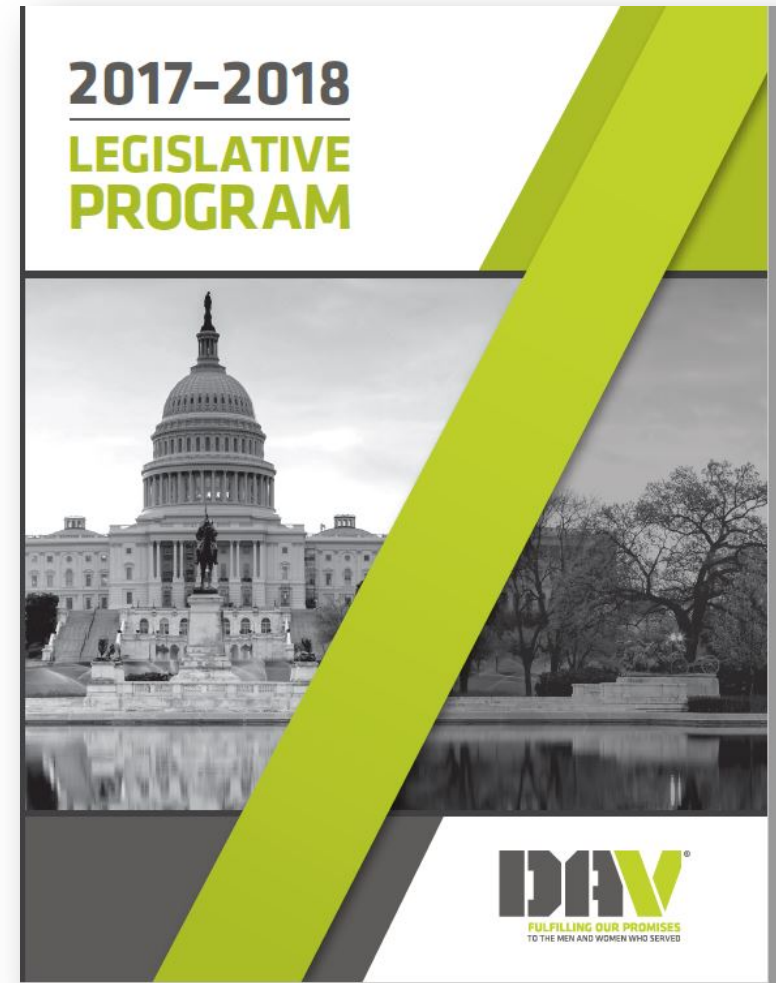
Legislative Director

Agenda

- Appeals Modernization & Implementation
- Resolutions
- Critical Policy Goal: Defending Our Benefits

DAV Resolutions

- Start of a Resolution
- Legislative Agenda
- Resolutions for Defending our Benefits



DAV Resolutions

- **Resolution No. 23**—Oppose Reduction, Taxation or Elimination of Veterans Benefits
- **Resolution No. 88**—Oppose Long-Term Rounding Down Cost-of-Living Adjustments in Veterans Benefits

DAV Resolutions

- **Resolution No. 93**—Support Legislation That Would Exempt the Benefits Paid to Wartime Service-Connected Disabled Veterans From the “PAYGO/CUTGO” Provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act

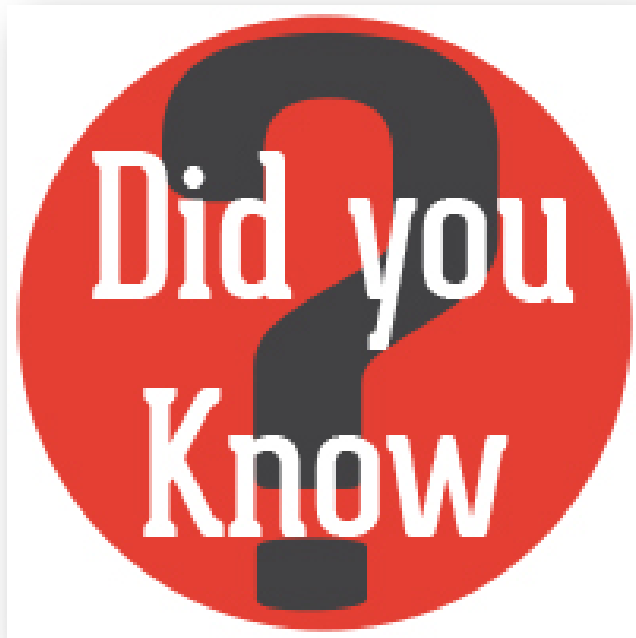
2018 CRITICAL POLICY GOAL

**Defending Our Benefits &
Protecting Our Future**

Defending Our Benefits

- Recent Bipartisan Legislation
- Proposals & Attacks on Our Benefits

Those proposals involved:



- **Total Disability based on Individual Unemployability**
- **COLA Round-down including as PAYGO**

Defending & Protecting Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability

Total Disability based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU)

- Administration's FY 2018 Budget Proposal
- Eliminate eligibility for TDIU for veterans at 62 and to cut off anyone in receipt of SSA retirement

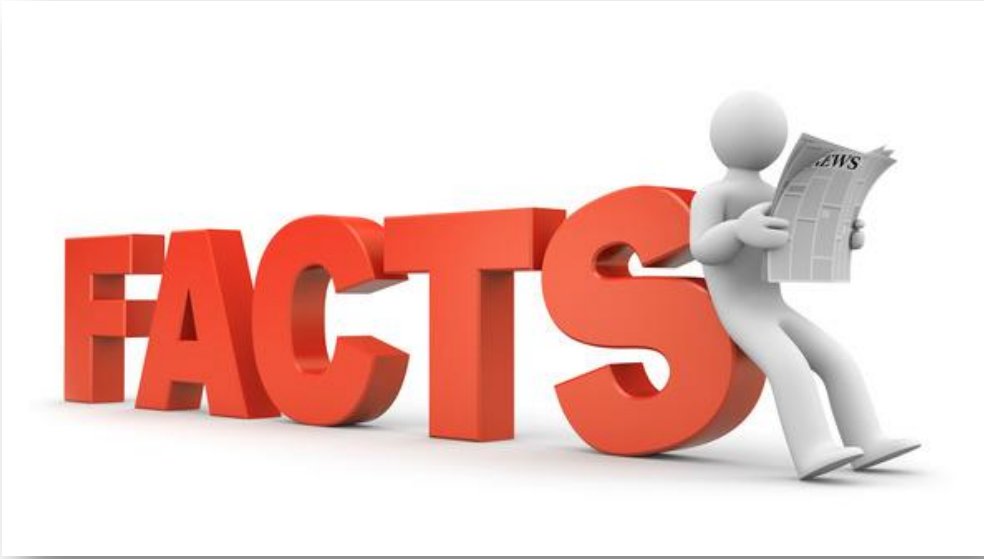
TDIU

DAV and other VSOs pushed back on the Administration and reminded them of these key elements:



TDIU

VA regulation 38 C.F.R. § 4.19, states **the VA is precluded** from considering a veteran's age in a determination of a Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability.



TDIU

TDIU **is not** a retirement or pension program and is neither similar nor related to Social Security retirement benefits.

TDIU

A VA determination of a Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability is not the same nor is it similar to Federal Unemployment Insurance; **it is a disability compensation benefit.**

TDIU

Although the Administration backed away from this proposal, the threat remains.



OPERATION:
**KEEP THE
PROMISE**

TDIU

We urge Congress to
enact H.R. 4369, the
Protecting Benefits for
Disabled Veterans Act of
2017. (Resolution No. 23)

Defending & Protecting Benefits from PAYGO

PAYGO

- Congressional Budget Rules require any new benefits that would increase federal spending must be offset with reductions
- Referred to as “PAYGO”

PAYGO



This means they must **“Pay as They Go”**. Each Committee is instructed to find reductions/offsets from their own programs.

PAYGO

We firmly reject the PAYGO rule that requires one group of veterans to “pay for” any new or expanded benefits for another group of veterans.
(DAV Resolution No. 93)



OPERATION:
**KEEP THE
PROMISE**

PAYGO

We urge Congress to **exempt veterans' benefits and services from PAYGO rules**, since these benefits should be “paid for” by all Americans, not just veterans.

Defending & Protecting Cost-of Living Adjustment (COLA) from Long-term Round-down

COLA Round-down



There have been many attempts to round down the COLA as a “pay for” for proposed new or expanded veterans’ benefits.

COLA Round-down

- November 2017
- February 11, 2018, the Administration Budget Proposal for FY 2019.

COLA Round-down

We oppose any long-term rounding down of the COLA. (DAV Resolution No 88)

OPERATION:
**KEEP THE
PROMISE**



Additional Attacks on Our Benefits



Proposals to Attack Benefits

- Congressional Budget Office (CBO)
- Non-partisan agency seeking budget savings
- These are only proposals/not legislation

Proposed Elimination or Reduction



Eliminate Concurrent
Receipt of Military
Retirement and Disability
Compensation

Proposed Elimination or Reduction

Exclude Disability
Compensation for Certain
Disabilities “Unrelated”
to Military Service



Proposed Elimination or Reduction



Include All Disability
Compensation as
Taxable Income

Proposed Elimination or Reduction

February 11, 2018, the Administration released its proposed budget for FY 2019. They are requesting legislation to further eliminate or reduce our benefits.

Proposed Elimination or Reduction

Redefine Agent Orange
Exposure.

HUH?!

What's Next?

- Awareness Campaign
- Commander's Action Network
- Benefits Protection Teams

2018 CRITICAL POLICY GOAL

**Defending Our Benefits &
Protecting Our Future**



Shane Liermann
Assistant National
Legislative Director

sliermann@dav.org



2018 Mid-Winter Conference

Benefits Protection Team Tips

Jeremy Villanueva
Associate National Legislative
Director

Benefit Protection Team



Where are my BPT?

- Be that liaison between chapter and department
- Team up with the department BPTL
- Pass the WORD!
- Keep the people back at home informed
- Be prepared to debrief your chapter
- Get on that social media!!!



- facebook.com/DAV
- youtube.com/disabledamericanveterans
- twitter.com/davhq
- instagram.com/davhq
- flickr.com/photos/thedav
- linkedin.com/company/48969



Getting Prepared For Your Hill Visits

Gather your delegates and get organized

- Organize
- Pick the spokesperson(s)
- Discuss the issues
- Confirm your meeting places
- Gather materials
- Leave behind Critical Policy Goals

Meeting Your Representatives

- Try and be early
- Know that you might not be meeting with your representative
- Have a knowledgeable spokesperson
- Review the issues
 - Please note the “By The Numbers” on the back of the Critical Policy Goals
- Be ready for questions
- Thank them for their sponsorship or advocate for their support

Workshops

- Workshops give you the tools needed for your meetings
 - *Critical Policy Goals*
 - *By The Numbers*
 - *Legislative Program*
 - *Lobbying Evaluation Form (After Action Report)*

LOBBYING EVALUATION FORM

Please complete and return to:

Ms. Joy J. Ilem
National Legislative Director
Disabled American Veterans
807 Maine Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20024

NAME: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

MET WITH: _____

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

Does Congressional Member support:

Health Care Reform	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Benefits Protection	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Caregiver Support for all eras	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Women Veterans	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No

COMMITMENTS OR COMMENTS MADE:

OVERALL ATMOSPHERE AND ASSESSMENT OF MEETING:

Commander's Testimony

- Commander's Testimony
- *Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room G50 at 2:00 PM Tuesday February 27th*
 - Shows the strength of our Grassroots
 - Influence of the DAV



After Action

- How to Follow-Up
- Send a letter or email that includes:
 - Thanks
 - Promised Information
 - Brief synopsis of *Critical Policy Goals*
 - Copy of DAV Commander's testimony
- Please remember to complete the After Action Report and return to the national legislative department



Joy J. Ilem
National Legislative Director
Jilem@dav.org



Shane L. Liermann
Assistant National Legislative Director
Sliermann@dav.org

Thank You!

Questions?



Shurhonda Y. Love
Assistant National Legislative Director
Slove@dav.org

**National Service
& Legislative Headquarters
Washington, DC
(202)554-3501**



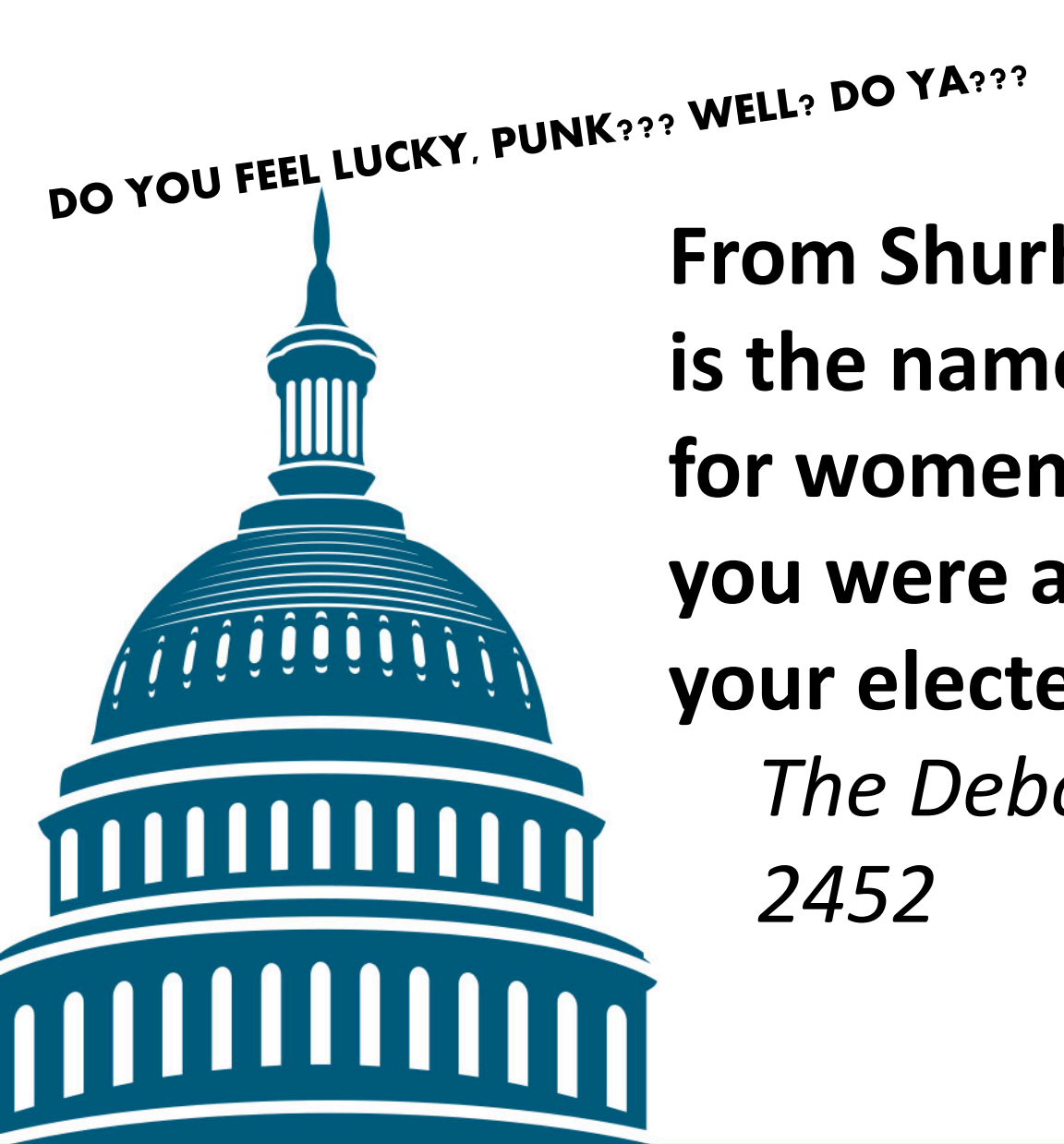
Adrian M. Atizado
Deputy National Legislative Director
aatizado@dav.org

Jeremy M. Villanueva
Associate National Legislative Director
jvillanueva@dav.org



From Adrian Atizado's presentation,
what is DAV's **number one**
legislative issue for 2018???

*Expanding eligibility for VA's
Comprehensive Caregiver Support
Program to caregivers of all eras*



DO YOU FEEL LUCKY, PUNK??? WELL? DO YA???

From Shurhonda Love's presentation, what is the name of the most comprehensive bill for women veteran's??? *Hint, it is the one you were asked to solicit the support of your elected officials*

The Deborah Sampson Act, S. 681 or H.R. 2452

What did the tree say to the lumberjack???

"Well I'm stumped..."



From Shane Liermann's presentation: what bill, name or number, is currently pending that will protect Individual Unemployability from being reduced due to retirement age???

H.R. 4369 or the Protecting Benefits for Disabled Veterans Act of 2017!



**From Jeremy Villanueva's presentation,
when and where will the Commander's
Testimony be held???**

*Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room
G50 at 2:00 PM Tuesday February
27th*

**If at first you don't succeed,
redefine success.**



Earlier today, Peter Dickinson talked about a number of bills being considered to strengthen and reform the VA health care system and the veterans choice program. What is the bill number or bill name of the specific legislation that DAV is supporting to reform VA health care???

***S. 2193-Caring for Our
Veterans Act of 2017***

Finally, the slide you've
all been waiting for...
The last one.



**In Joy Ilem's presentation, she discussed
DAV's 2018 award recipients. Please name
DAV's Veterans' Champion Awardee of
2018!**

*Senator Johnny Isakson (GA), Chairman of
the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee*