

In preparation for our 2017 Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, D.C., DAV has prepared a preview of the talking points we will be providing for your use in meeting with your elected officials. The preview information may be helpful to you in scheduling appointments with your Representatives or Senators. **Full Talking Points for each of these topics will be posted [here](#) on Friday, February 3, 2017.**

Reform of VA Health Care

The 2014 access-to-care crisis and aftermath highlighted the need for significant budget and policy reforms of the VA health care system. With the current veterans “choice” program set to expire this year, efforts must move from debating what’s next for VA to create the future VA health care system America’s veterans deserve.

DAV recently launched a new video entitled, “[Putting Choice in Context](#),” to educate veterans and policymakers about what “choice” could really mean for veterans and VA health care. With a new President, VA Secretary and Congress in place, it’s critical that any debate about “choice” consider the cost, impact on VA and the resulting consequences for veterans, particularly disabled veterans.

Fiscal Year 2018 VA Budget

VA began the current FY 2017 with a number of Congressional mandates without the required funds to implement them and its FY 2018 advanced funding woefully inadequate. We will provide the most up-to-date budget information at DAV’s Mid-Winter Conference with a call to action to ensure VA receives a sufficient budget to meet the needs of ill and injured veterans, their families and survivors.

Family Caregiver Support and Services

Last Congress, DAV’s work resulted in measureable progress to expand the eligibility for comprehensive caregiver supports to veterans of all eras. However, legislation was not enacted to correct this inequity. We will renew our efforts in the 115th Congress to ensure veterans of all eras and their caregivers have access to these important services.

Women Veterans

DAV’s special report—*Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home* identified gaps in benefits and services across the federal landscape for women service members and veterans. A recent Government Accountability Office report offers additional recommendations to improve women’s health programs and comprehensive primary care services for women veterans.

Appeals Reform

With the help of DAV and other veterans service organizations, VA is working to address its unacceptable backlog in disability compensation appeals. We will continue our focus and efforts on the enactment of legislation for appeals reform in the 115th Congress.

DAV’s official talking points for 2017 Mid-Winter Conference will be posted [here](#) on **Friday, February 3, 2017.**