



# **Benefits Protection Team Seminar**

**DAV National Convention  
July 13, 2018**



# **2018 National Convention**

**Benefits Protection Team Seminar**

**Friday, July 13, 2018**

Joy J. Ilem

National Legislative  
Director

# National Legislative Department Staff

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

# Seminar Agenda:

- Importance of Benefit Protection Team Leader (BPTL)
- Duties of BPTL
- Tools available to become an effective Advocate
- Overview of New BPTL Recognition Award in 2019
- Election Season Do's and Dont's
- Overview of VA Mission Act

**Handouts from today's Seminar are Available On-Line at**  
**[www.dav.org/events/2018-national-convention](http://www.dav.org/events/2018-national-convention)**

# National Legislative Interim Committee 2017-2018



- Al Labelle, Chairman (WI)
- Jim Procunier (VA)
- Mark Aaron (IL)
- Kevin Dasing (NM)

# Benefits Protection Team Leader Awards for Outstanding Advocacy Performance

- Who?** Departments and appointed BPTLs are eligible to participate
- What?** Awards based on performance of legislative advocacy activities
- When?** Based on all advocacy efforts from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019
- How?** Department/BPTL compete within 5 divisions—completion of specific legislative activities
- Where?** First awards presented at DAV National Convention 2019

## Criteria for Selection of Advocacy Awards:

- Efforts to increase activity **DAV Commander's Action Network** (DAV CAN) members signed up in your state;
- The number of **emails** sent to Congress on action alerts from the DAV CAN advocacy website;
- Department submission of **resolutions** for consideration at national convention—related to **federal/national issues**;
- The number of **Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP)** hours reported on **legislative efforts**;

## Criteria for Selection of Awards (cont.):

- A department **website** containing legislative/advocacy information such as alerts and DAV CAN links;
- A department **newsletter** (monthly, quarterly or semi-annually) that includes relevant legislative/advocacy information;
- Use of **social media** on legislative issues, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube;
- Attendance of department BPTL at the DAV **Mid-Winter** Conference;



## Criteria for Selection of Awards (cont.):

- Scheduled **meetings** with **elected officials** in **DC** during the DAV Mid-Winter Conference;
- Scheduled meeting at congressional state or **district offices** anytime during the year; and
- Department **BPTL-led seminar** or class on legislative issues presented at a district, department or chapter meeting/function or community event (to include educating and/or training chapter level BPTLs).

## Next Steps:

- Departments will receive a letter outlining the Award Program
- Advocacy Award Forms will be made available on-line
- Complete and Submit Form to DAV National Headquarters
- Must be received by June 30, 2019 for award consideration
- An Advocacy Award will be given to highest performing Departments/BPTLs within each of the 5 Divisions

# DAV National Legislative Staff



**A.K.A: The “A” Team**



# Thank You!

**Joy J. Ilem**  
**National Legislative Director**  
[jilem@dav.org](mailto:jilem@dav.org)



# **Resolution Process, National Convention Committees, and Committee Delegates/Alternates**

**Adrian Atizado**  
**Deputy National  
Legislative Director**

# AGENDA TOPICS

- Resolution Process
- National Convention Committees
- Convention Committee Delegates

# RESOLUTION PROCESS

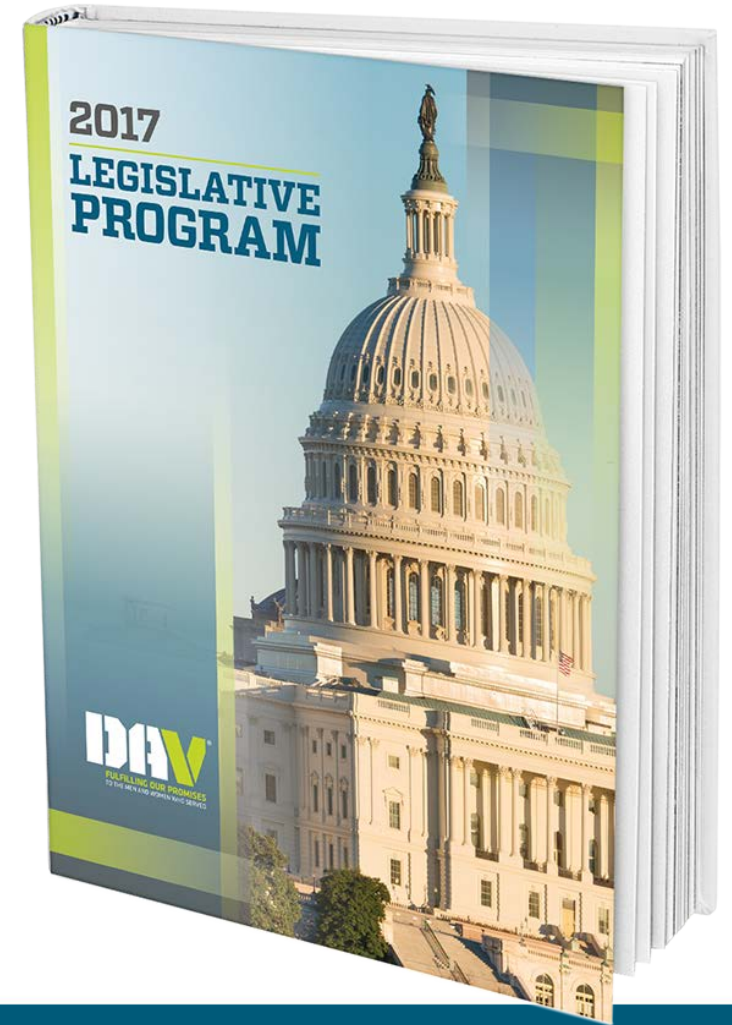
“No member shall appear before any legislative body or speak in the name of this Organization or any subdivision thereof propounding a position contrary to any resolution then in effect with regard to such legislation, which resolution has been regularly adopted by the National Convention, the National Executive Committee, a state executive committee or state department.”

DAV National Bylaws



# RESOLUTION PROCESS

Resolutions adopted at  
National Convention  
compose DAV's  
Legislative Program





# RESOLUTION PROCESS



# NATIONAL CONVENTION COMMITTEES

- Legislation and Veterans Rights
- Hospital and Voluntary Services
- Employment
- General
- Constitution and Bylaws
- Nominating

# NATIONAL CONVENTION COMMITTEES

## Scope of Convention Committees:



**Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights** consider all resolutions and matters regarding compensation, pensions, legal and guardianship matters, appeals, insurance

# NATIONAL CONVENTION COMMITTEES

## Scope of Convention Committees:

just  
another  
example

**Committee on Employment** considers the employment of disabled veterans in Federal Civil Service, state, county, and city governments, and vocational rehabilitation, education and training for veterans and their eligible dependents.

# NATIONAL CONVENTION COMMITTEES



*Help your  
Delegates and  
Alternates  
prepare.*

# COMMITTEE DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

District Meetings  
select Delegates  
and Alternates to  
Resolution Committees

## 2018 DAV NATIONAL CONVENTION

**TENTATIVE AGENDA 04-19-18**

Grand Sierra Resort and Casino

Reno, Nevada

\$84 single/double for GSR Rooms / \$104 single/ double Summit Rooms

### Thursday- 07/12/2018

10:00 am - 4:00 pm	Registration
5:00 pm	Auxiliary NEC Meeting followed by
6:00 pm	Auxiliary NFC Meeting

### Friday- 07/13/2018

8:00 am - 4:00 pm	Registration
9:00 am	DAV NEC Meeting
(Immediately following NEC)	DAV Board of Directors Meeting
9:00 am - 10:15 am	District Meetings - Auxiliary (odd numbers)
10:30 am - 11:30 am	District Meetings - Auxiliary (even numbers)
11:00 am	Seminar- DAV Membership Portal Training
11:00 am	Benefit Protection Team Leader Workshop
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	District Meetings - DAV (even numbers)
1:00 pm	Walgreens Emotional Well-Being Workshop
2:15 pm - 3:30 pm	District Meetings - DAV (odd numbers)
2:15 pm	walgreens Emotional Well-Being workshop
3:30 pm	Memorial Service Rehearsal (DAV & DAVA NEC)
7:00 pm	"Hitler in Los Angeles" Seminar by Author, Dr. Steven Ross

### Saturday - 07/14/2018

8:00 am - 4:00 pm	Registration
8:30 am	DAV/ Auxiliary Joint Opening Session
1:15 pm - 1:45 pm	Seminar- VA Healthcare Update
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Seminar- DAV Service & Legislation
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Auxiliary First Business Session
1:00 pm / 4:15 pm	DAV Convention Committee Meetings (various)
7:30 pm - 9:30 pm	National Commander's Event



# COMMITTEE DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

## Responsibilities:

- Resolutions from your District/Department(s)
- Review Legislative Program
- Observe and Participate

***“Always be prepared...”***

# COMMITTEE DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

## District/ Department(s) Resolutions:

ask for it

- Speak to your NEC
- Resolution Coordinating Office



# COMMITTEE DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

## Review Legislative Program:

Learn about current and important DAV issues in your Committee

<https://www.dav.org/learn-more/legislation/resolutions/>



# COMMITTEE DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

## Resolution by Category:

- Ratings and Awards
- Claims and Appeals Procedures
- Housing, Insurance, Cemeteries and Burial
- Hospital and Medical Care
- Employment, Education and General
- Military Affairs and National Security
- Americanism and Miscellaneous

<https://www.dav.org/learn-more/legislation/resolutions/>



# COMMITTEE DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

## Committee Meeting:

- Call to Order by Advisors
- Roll Call of Delegates - one per District and one from Blind Veterans National Chapter
- Elect Chair and Secretary
- Reading the Statement of Policy
- Distribute Advisor's report
- Adopt, Reject, Reject as Duplicate each Resolution

# COMMITTEE DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

## Convention Resolution Committee Meeting



- Advisors and Advisor's Report
- Observe and Participate
- Take notes to report back to District/Departments

# SUMMARY

- **Resolution Process**
  - Chapter → Department → National
- **National Convention Committees**
  - Legislation and Veterans Rights; Hospital and Voluntary Services; Employment; General; *Constitution and Bylaws; Nominating*
- **Convention Committee Delegates**
  - Track any District Resolutions; Know Issues/Review Legislative Program; Observe, Participate and Report Back



# Thank You!

**Adrian Atizado**  
**Deputy National**  
**Legislative Director**  
**[aatizado@dav.org](mailto:aatizado@dav.org)**



# **DAV Advocacy Website & Resources**

**Shane Liermann**  
Assistant National  
Legislative Director

# DAV Advocacy Website

- DAV Legislative Advocacy Page
- How To Find and Navigate
- Resources
  - Issue Briefs, Resolution Book, Testimony, Independent Budget, and Webinars



# Navigating DAV Advocacy Website

## www.dav.org



Benefits Claims for Veterans and Family Members Represented in 2017

2 5 0 , 7 9 0

GET HELP WITH YOURS

VETERANS  
Need Claims Help?

MEMBERSHIP  
Join, Log In, Shop

LEARN MORE  
Learn About Our Mission

HELP DAV  
Support, Volunteer, Advocate

# DAV VICTORIES FOR VETERANS challenge



- Ways To Give
- Volunteer
- Advocate
- Charitable Service Trust
- National Service Foundation
- Gift Planning
- Corporate Partners
- DAV 5K
- Fitness Challenge
- Celebrity Ambassadors

our own challenge to America's veterans conquer theirs by participating in DAV's Victories for Veterans Challenge.

GET STARTED



[Home](#) > [Learn More](#) > [Legislation](#)



## DAV: Taking Action at Home

Everything on the line in defense of America's freedom. Our public and political leaders need to be kept informed of the challenges they face returning to normal life. DAV's legislative grassroots campaign makes sure they know what they need to do.

DAV's multi-aspect legislative campaign provides this education and support in the capitol and across the country. Take some time here and learn how DAV is working with lawmakers on your behalf. Read more and discover how you, too, can stand with our heroes and make sure their voice is heard in Washington.

[DAV's current advocacy campaigns](#)

COMMANDERS ACTION NETWORK

REFORM VA HEALTHCARE

WOMEN VETERANS

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

APPEALS & CLAIMS REFORM

RESOURCES



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[Home](#) > [Learn More](#) > *Legislation*

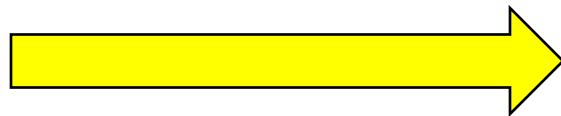


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REFORM VA HEALTHCARE

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RESOURCES

Home > Learn More > Legislation > *Legislative Resources*

## Issue Briefs



To help educate legislators, candidates and agencies, we have outlined below a range of issues facing veterans that need to be addressed.



## Resolutions

Following are those issues that Convention delegates have identified for primary consideration in the upcoming year.



## Testimony

DAV frequently testifies before Congress to advise and advocate changes in law or policy. All DAV testimony.



## Independent Budget

The Independent Budget is formulated by DAV, Paralyzed Veterans of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United





**FULFILLING OUR PROMISES**  
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

Benefits Claims for Veterans and Family Members Represented in 2017

2 5 0 , 7 9 0

GET HELP WITH YOURS

**VETERANS**

Need Claims Help?

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**LEARN MORE**

Learn About Our Mission

**HELP DAV**

Support, Volunteer, Advocate

**DONATE NOW**

**Issue Briefs**



[Home](#) > [Learn More](#) > [Legislation](#) > *Issue Briefs*

### **DAV's Legislative Priorities**

To help educate legislators, candidates and agencies, we have outlined below a range of issues facing veterans that need to be addressed.

If you have any questions for DAV's legislative team, please contact us at (202) 554-3501 or [LegislativePublic@davmail.org](mailto:LegislativePublic@davmail.org).



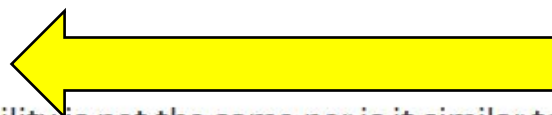
### VA Health Information Technology

VA has recently made a decision to adopt DOD's platform that will allow the Department to develop the architecture necessary to support its health IT needs.



### Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability

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.





## ISSUE BRIEF: Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability

### The Situation

- Over 4 million veterans are currently receiving VA compensation benefits. Of those, approximately 350,000 veterans are in receipt of Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU), commonly referred to as IU, and roughly 200,000 of those veterans are over the age of 65.
- When a veteran's disability is rated less than a total 100 percent evaluation, but he or she is unable to obtain or maintain substantial gainful employment, VA regulations allow the veteran to apply for Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability. TDIU is based on the severity of the individual veteran's unique disability picture and its impact on the veteran's ability to obtain and maintain substantial gainful employment. Generally, the veteran must have a single disability rated at 60 percent or a combined evaluation of 70 percent to be eligible for TDIU.





Home > Learn More > Legislation > *Legislative Resources*

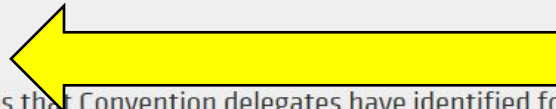
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**2017-2018**  
**LEGISLATIVE**  
**PROGRAM**



**DAV**<sup>®</sup>  
FULFILLING OUR PROMISES  
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

**DAV**<sup>®</sup>



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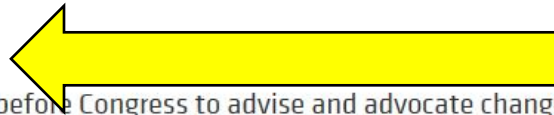
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[Home](#) > [Learn More](#) > [Legislation](#) > *Testimony*

DAV frequently testifies before Congress to advise and advocate changes in law or policy. All DAV testimony is presented below.

## 2018 Testimony

13  
JUNE

[Testimony before Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs](#)

Statement of Jeremy M. Villanueva



17  
MAY

[Testimony before House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program of the VA](#)

Statement of Shane L. Liermann



***STATEMENT OF  
JEREMY M. VILLANUEVA  
ASSOCIATE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
JUNE 13, 2018***

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for inviting DAV (Disabled American Veterans) to testify at this legislative hearing of the Subcommittee on Health of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. As you know, DAV is a non-profit veterans service organization comprised of more than one million wartime service-disabled veterans that is dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. DAV is pleased to offer our views on the bills under consideration by the Subcommittee.

Home > Learn More > Legislation > *Legislative Resources*

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# Independent Budget



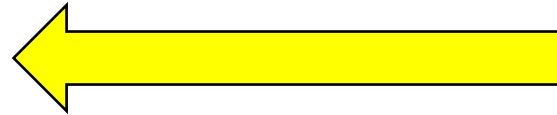
[Home](#) > [Learn More](#) > [Legislation](#) > *Independent Budget*



The Independent Budget is formulated by DAV, Paralyzed Veterans of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States in order to provide budget recommendations to the Department of Veterans Affairs. These recommendations are based on a systematic methodology that takes a wide range of factors into account. This year marks the 31st year that DAV and its coauthors have worked to provide budgetary recommendations that are based on facts, rigorous analysis, and sound reasoning.

We owe our veterans an immense debt of gratitude for their service to the country and are obligated to provide them with the best care possible. The Independent Budget seeks to ensure Veterans receive this care by providing responsible, intelligent budget recommendations.

[Read the Independent Budget here.](#)



# Legislative Resources



[Home](#) > [Learn More](#) > [Legislation](#) > *Legislative Resources*

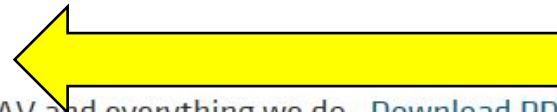
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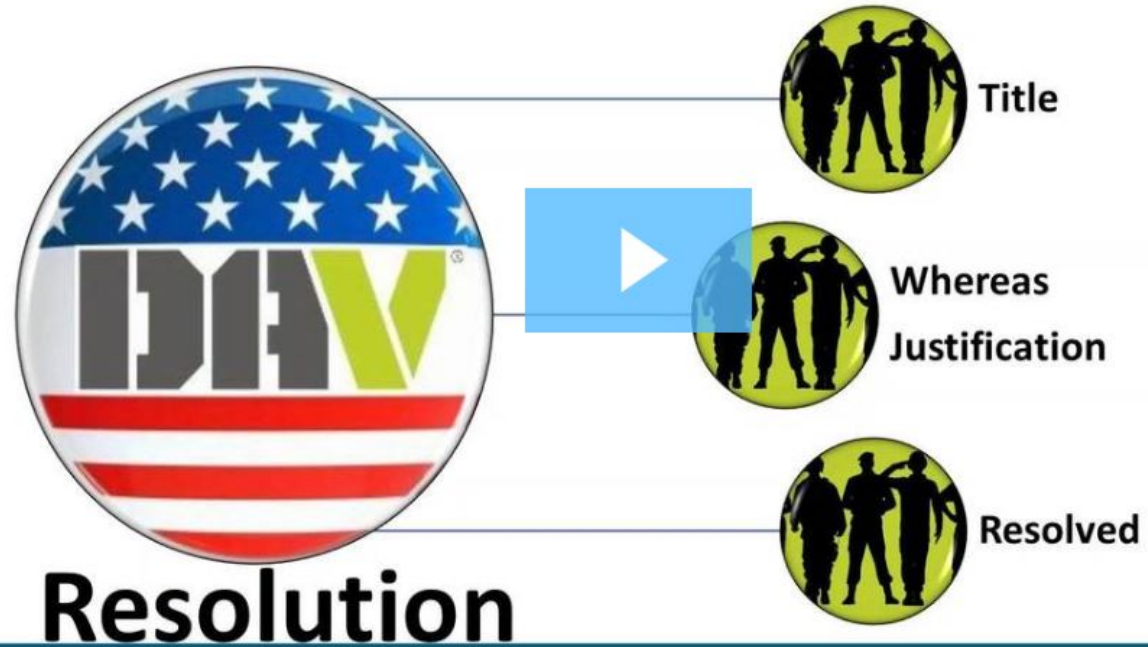
## DAV & The Resolution Process Webinar

The importance of DAV Resolutions and how it impacts DAV and everything we do. [Download PDF copy.](#)





# RESOLUTIONS



## Resolution



2018 Resolutions Webinar Recorded Video

# Summary



- Advocacy Website
- Resources
  - Issue Briefs,
  - Resolution Book,
  - Testimony,
  - Independent Budget,
  - Webinars



# **DAV's Commanders Action Network (DAV CAN)**

**Shurhonda Love**  
Assistant National  
Legislative Director

# Topics

- DAV CAN—What does it stand for, and what does it do?
- Example of an Alert/Take Action/ 3E's
- Does it really matter?
- Why should I join?
- How to Sign Up—its easy!
- Holding a DAV CAN DRIVE
- Getting members from your chapter, department, neighborhood to join!

# What is DAV CAN?

## can<sup>1</sup>

kan/  
verb

1. be able to.
2. "they can run fast"
3. be permitted to.
4. "you can use the phone if you want to"

## DAV-CAN<sup>1</sup>

kan/  
verb

1. DAV's Commander's Action Network
2. Grassroots Advocacy.
3. "You "CAN" make a difference"
4. Take Action
5. 3E's Engage, Educate, Expect
6. "Together, DAV members CAN make a difference!"



# DAV CAN Action Alert



... will  
depo  
paren  
educa  
of alc  
suicid

Welcome back, skinsfanimb2002@yahoo.com. Not You?

\* Prefix

\* First Name

\* Last Name

\* Address Line 1

Address Line 2

\* City

\* State

\* ZIP Code

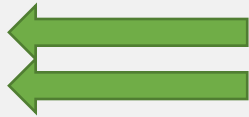
\* Email Address

\* Phone Number

Remember Me

Email Opt-In

[CLICK HERE TO PREVIEW AND SEND YOUR MESSAGE ►](#)



Peer Specialists

ors for the Department of  
ess the special needs of

immunities after wartime  
al network, and be single  
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sexual trauma and abuse  
to homelessness and

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# Does it really matter, do I make a difference?



**YES!**



**80279**

Total Activities



**16137**

Total Advocates  
that Took Action



SPREADING THE WORD SOCIALLY

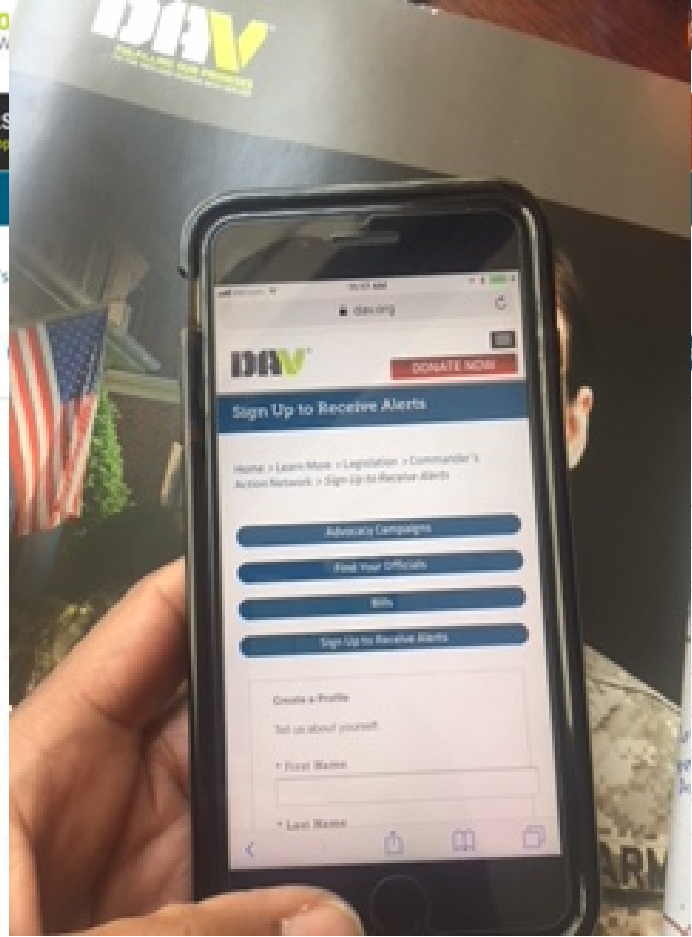
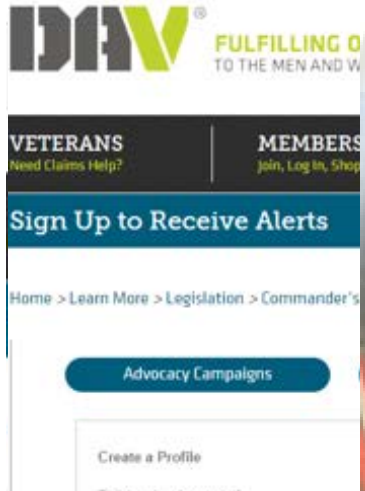
# Benefits of Joining the DAV CAN



**FREE**



# Signing Up, It's Easy



Benefits Claims for Veterans and Family Members Represented in 2017  
50,790  
GET HELP WITH YOURS

DONATE NOW

Family Members Represented in 2017  
250,790  
GET HELP WITH YOURS

DONATE NOW

Fill In



armed benefits of ill and  
mymakers about the  
updates on **key legislative**  
**IN** you can share your views  
ement is critical, and  
the men and women who

DAV's **Benefits Protection**

Click

Register

Click

Sign Up to Receive Alerts



# Hosting a DAV CAN Drive

Chapter Meetings

Department & National Convention

Military Appreciation Nights or  
other events



# Where to find members



**Anyone  
can join...**



Caring Is Everything



**Thank You!**  
**Shurhonda Love**  
**Assistant National**  
**Legislative Director**  
**(202)554-3501**



# **BPTLs Tools, Duties, & Responsibilities**

**Jeremy Villanueva**  
Associate National  
Legislative Director

# Topics



1. Tool Kit
2. Duties & Responsibilities of the BPTL
3. List of Resources Available to You
4. Network Building
5. Engaging Your Department

## BPT ToolKit

- Letter Templates
- Sample Emails
- Instructional Videos
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Forms for Mid-Winter
- Invitations

The screenshot shows the DAV website's navigation bar with links for VETERANS (Need Claims Help?), MEMBERSHIP (Join, Log In, Shop), LEARN MORE (Learn About Our Mission), HELP DAV (Support, Volunteer, Advocate), and a prominent DONATE NOW button. Below the navigation is a hero image of a smiling couple in front of an American flag. A call to action box on the right says "Join USAA in supporting DAV" with a "FIND OUT HOW" button. A "READ MORE" button is located at the bottom of the hero image. Below the hero image, the text reads "SERVING VETERANS SINCE 1920" and "We are dedicated to a single purpose: Empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity." with a "LEARN MORE ABOUT US" link.



## What Does A BPTL Do???

- Engages the Community
- Keeps their Membership Informed
- Fosters Relationships with Representatives
- Employs Social Media
- Forms Networks of Engaged Citizens
- Utilizes Local News Media
- Organizes Regional DAV CAN Drives
- Train Other BPTs
- Helps Prepare Resolutions for National Convention





# Webinars

- Preparing for Midwinter
- How To Write Resolutions
- Department Convention Prep
- National Convention & Committees

## Upcoming Webinars

August: Duties of the BPTL

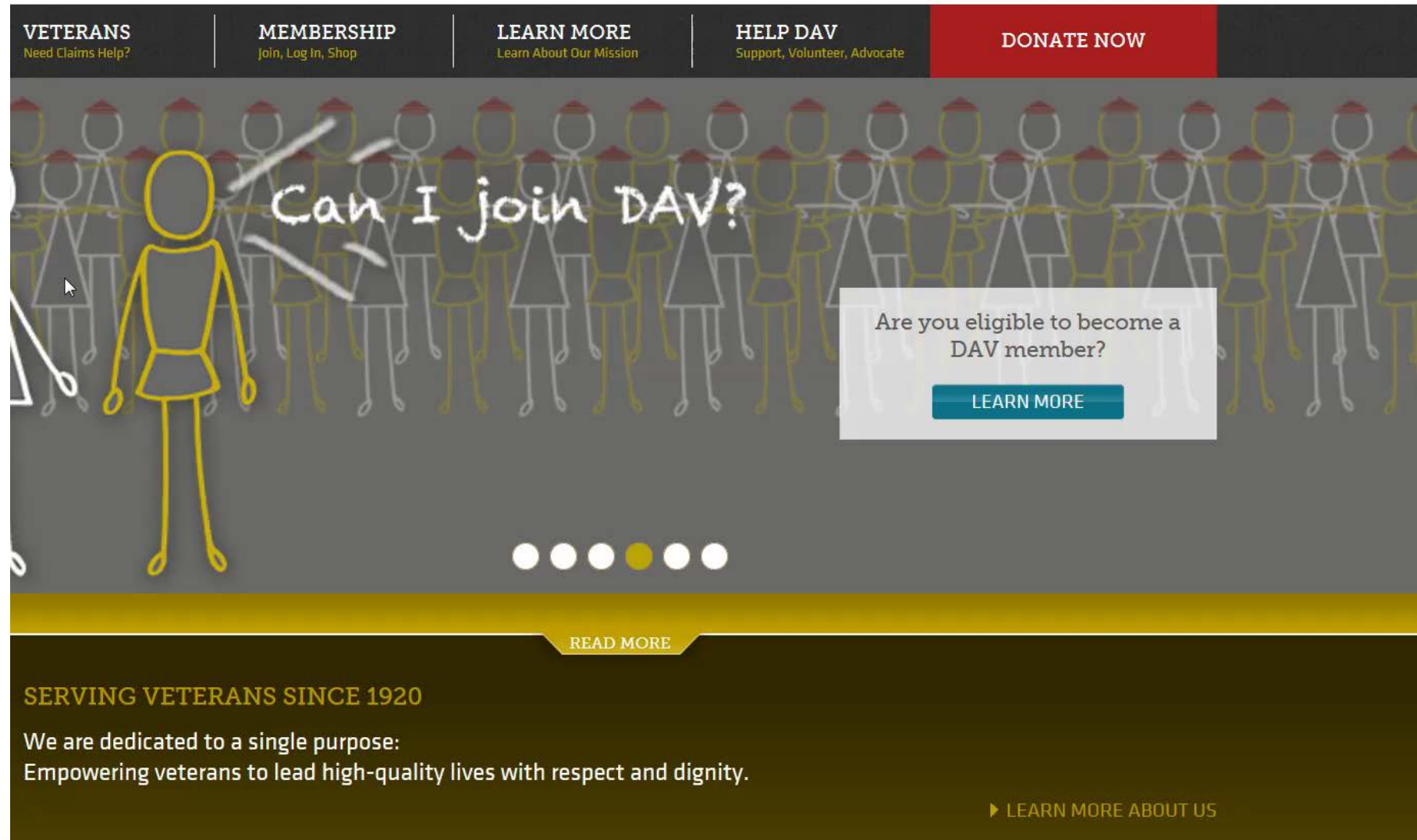
August: The Legislative Process

Early Fall: Election Do's & Don'ts

September: Social Media

October: Working With Local Representatives

December: Building A Grassroots Network



**VETERANS**  
Need Claims Help?

**MEMBERSHIP**  
Join, Log In, Shop

**LEARN MORE**  
Learn About Our Mission

**HELP DAV**  
Support, Volunteer, Advocate

**DONATE NOW**

# Can I join DAV?

Are you eligible to become a DAV member?

[LEARN MORE](#)

[READ MORE](#)

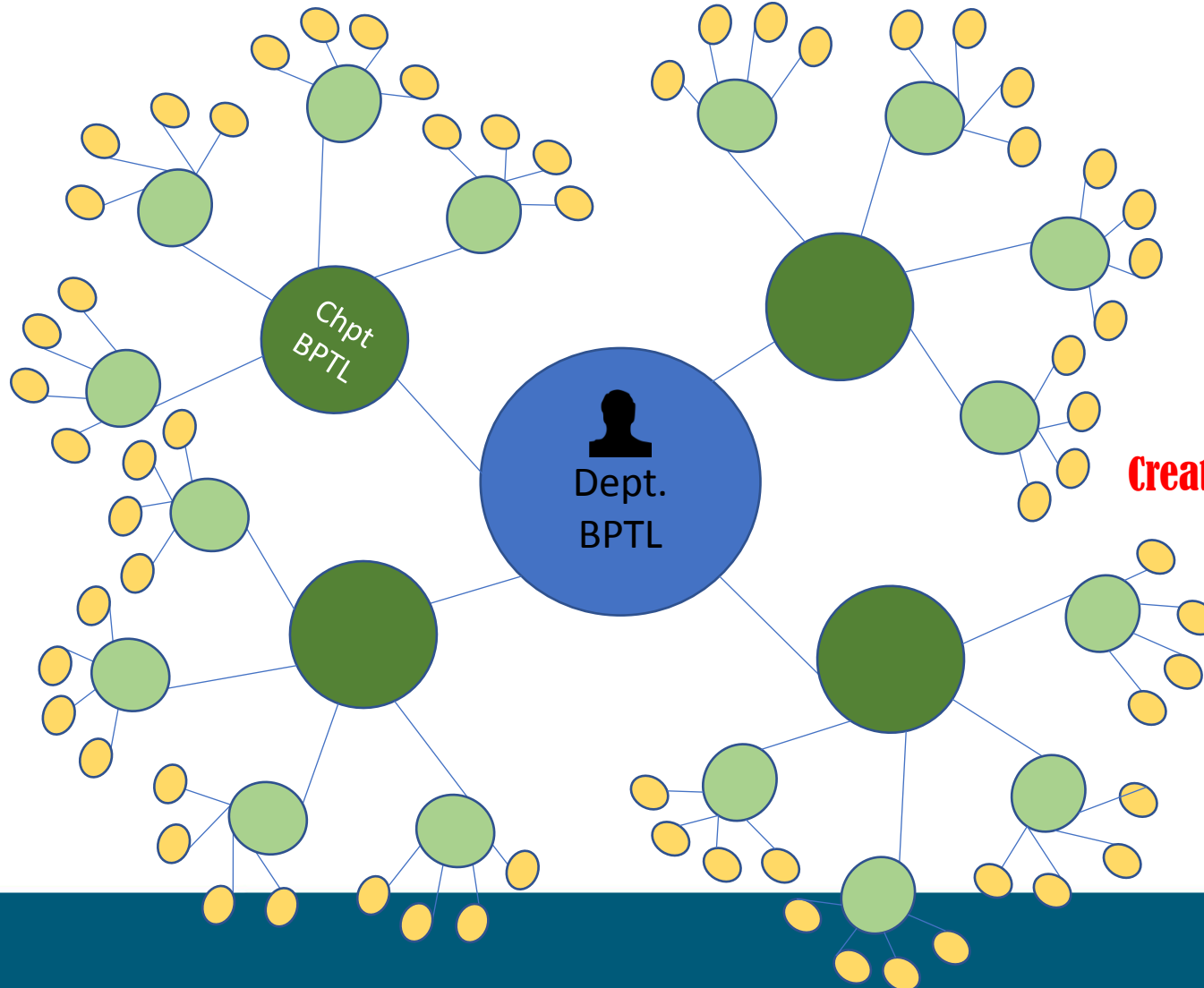
**SERVING VETERANS SINCE 1920**

We are dedicated to a single purpose:  
Empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

[▶ LEARN MORE ABOUT US](#)

# Establishing Your Benefits Protection Team

**Expanding Our Reach**



**Building Our Networks**

**Create A Tidal Wave of Involvement**

# Engaging Your Department

- Reach out to your Chapter BPTLs/Leadership
- Creating a Platform for Communication
- Include BPTL training in your Department/Chapter Events
- Contact National Legislative team for input
- Reach out for BPTL team training

“Being a BPTL is not a *spectator* sport.”  
Al Labelle





**Thank You!**

**Jeremy Villanueva**

**Associate Legislative Director**

**[jvillanueva@dav.org](mailto:jvillanueva@dav.org)**



# **How DAV Advocacy Led to Another Victory for Veterans**

**Peter Dickinson**  
Senior Executive Advisor

# Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010

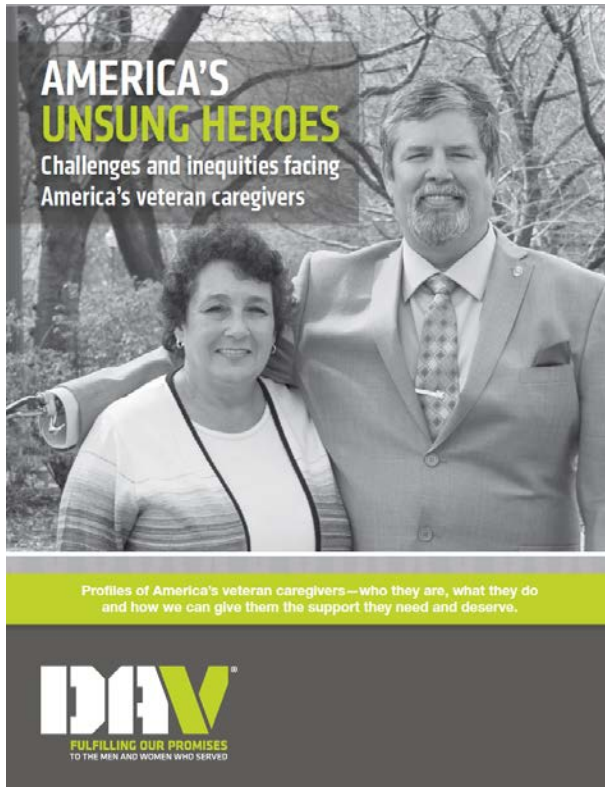
- Signed on May 5, 2010
- Began Providing Benefits in February 2011
- ONLY Veterans Injured On or After September 11, 2001
- ONLY Injuries, NOT Illnesses



# THE UNSUNG HEROES INITIATIVE



# New Caregiver Report: America's Unsung Heroes



**What interventions and supports exist? Who are delivering those supports?**

### Existing caregiver supports

**W**hile many veterans will recover from severe illnesses and injuries, many others will need a lifetime of support from family caregivers. Despite documented physical, emotional and financial hardships and knowledge of effective interventions against caregiver burden, family caregivers of disabled veterans receive little support from the federal government, compromising their ability to provide care to their loved one. Despite myriad programs in the VA and other federal and state agencies, resources are inadequate, eligibility is restricted and each program has other limitations. Further, there is little or no coordination among the many programs.

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)**  
The VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) is available only to veterans and service members who served after Sept. 11, 2001 and who have permanent, catastrophic injuries, receive outpatient care, and have a designated primary caregiver who provides assistance with at least one basic personal care activities (also called an Activity of Daily Living or ADL). PCAFC is the first and only integrated program that is required to provide a monthly stipend, coverage for travel expenses, access to health coverage, mental health care, peer counseling, respite care, and basic and injury-specific caregiver training.

For veteran caregivers severely ill and injured before Sept. 11, 2001, VA offers caregiver support through programs that are primarily within the VA's office of geriatrics and extended care because of this population's need for long-term services and supports, including family caregivers. In 2016, of all veterans enrolled in the VA health care system 48 percent were aged 65 and over, with Vietnam-era veterans being the largest cohort of veterans and the cohort now reaching advanced age. Of all VA long-term services and supports, the following types of home- and community-based care are those having a more direct impact in supporting family caregivers, which includes: Respite services provided through other services such as adult day care, homemaker and home health aide and skilled home care; home-based primary care; case management and coordination; transportation services; general caregiver education; and veteran-directed home and community based services.

**RESPIRE CARE**  
Intended to give family caregivers a short-term break from their role as caregivers, respite care provides veterans needed skilled services and case management, as well as help with activities of daily living. Respite services can help relieve stress and isolation for family caregivers by allowing them to take time to run errands or go out of town for a few days without worrying about the veteran being left alone at home.

Respite care is provided in an inpatient (VA medical center, nursing home) setting, outpatient (adult day care) or in-home setting (Homemaker and Home Health Aide Care and Skilled Home Health Care).

unsungheroesinitiative.org 13

### The impact of caregiving

**C**aregiver burden is the strain or load borne of caring for an older, chronically ill or disabled family member or other person. It is a multidimensional response to the physical, psychological, emotional, social and financial stressors associated with caring for another person.

Research shows that the caregiver role involves a number of negative consequences impacting employment and financial security, mental and physical health and personal, social and civic connections.

Compared to caregivers nationally, veteran caregivers face unique challenges. For example, about 7 to 8 percent of the general population will have PTSD at some point in their lives and about 8 million adults have PTSD during a given year. About 10 percent of women and 4 percent of men develop PTSD sometime in their lives.

The number of veterans with PTSD varies by service era but is higher than the number within the general population. About 11 to 20 percent of post-9/11 veterans have PTSD in a given year and about 12 percent of Gulf War veterans have PTSD in a given year. It is estimated that about 30 percent of Vietnam veterans have had PTSD in their lifetime. Another cause of PTSD in the military can be military sexual trauma (MST). Among veterans who use VA health care, about 23 percent of women reported sexual assault while in the military and 55 percent of women and 38 percent of men experienced sexual harassment during military service.

According to the VA, veterans suffering from PTSD pose a particular challenge for their family caregivers. For example, wives of veterans diagnosed with PTSD tend to take on a bigger share of household tasks such as paying bills or housework. They also do more caretaking of children and members of their extended family. The RAND study focus group of military caregivers with children indicated they did not have the time or energy to fulfill their parenting

*"I no longer have a life of my own. My husband always has to come first or his life could be in danger of slipping away."*  
—Linda Alonzo, DAV Veteran Family Caregiver Survey

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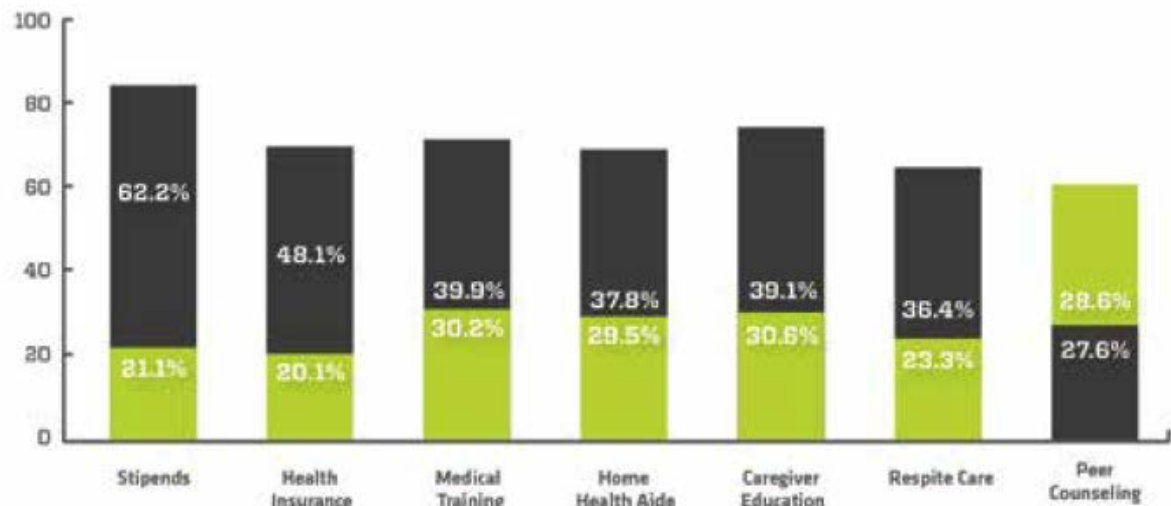


# New Caregiver Survey

## Caregiver Assistance Wanted

If the following services were made available, how important would each be in helping to support the family caregiver as they care for and assist the disabled veteran?

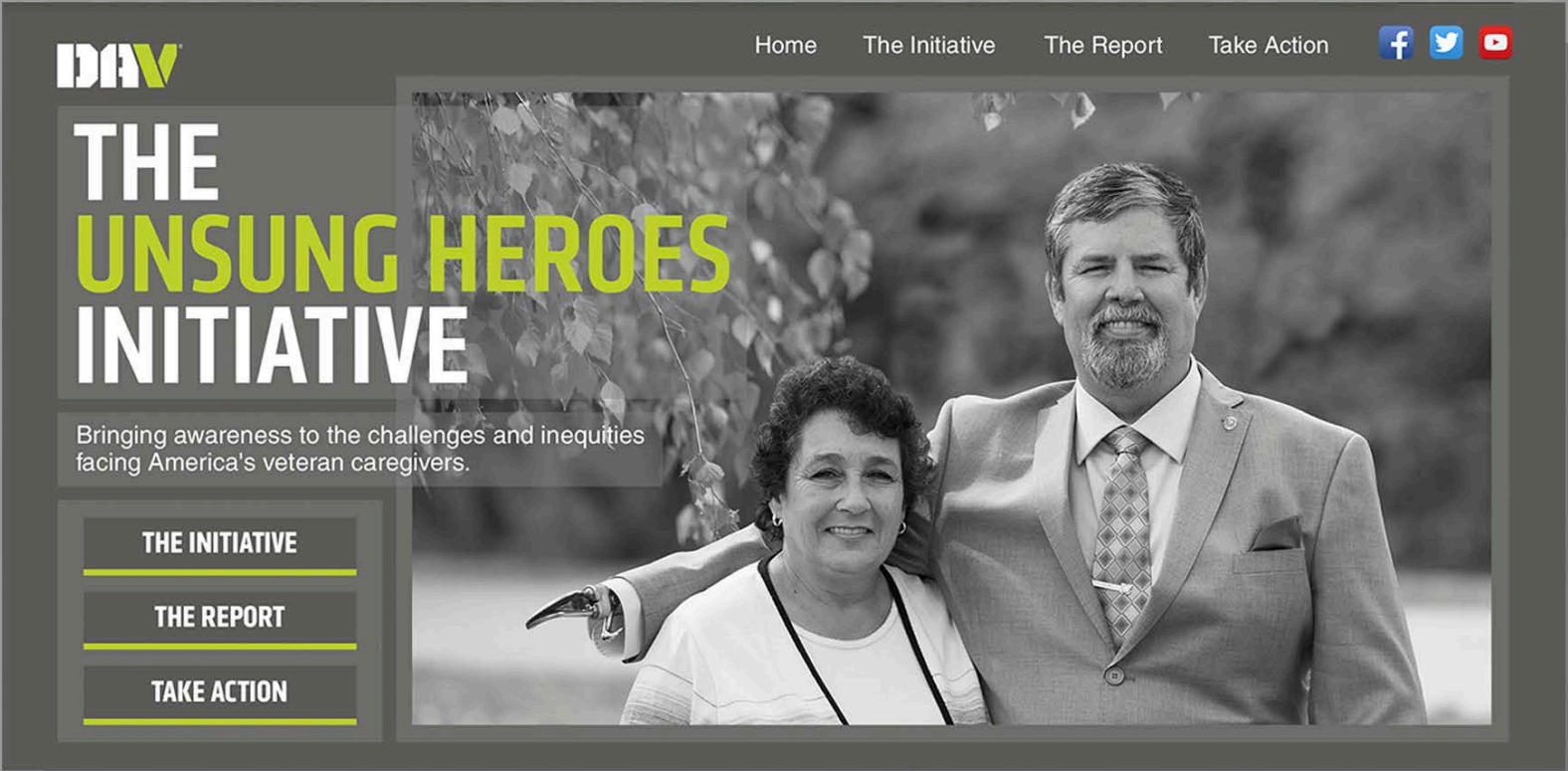
■ Important  
■ Very Important



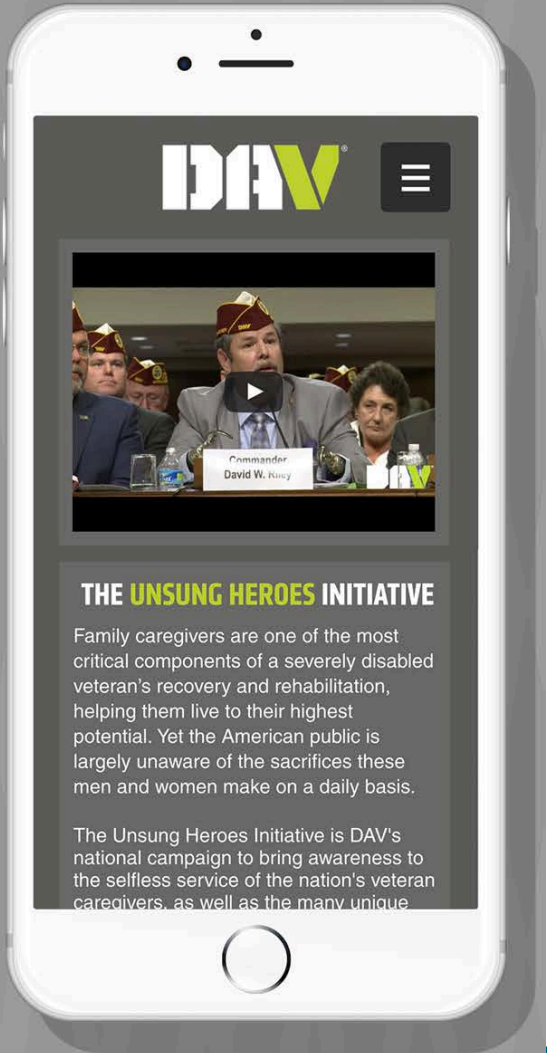
## Years of Caregiving

Average years	9.8
Pre-9/11	10.5%
Post-9/11	6.8%
More than 10 years	38.7%
More than 20 years	13.3%
More than 30 years	5.3%
More than 40 years	2.6%

# New Caregiver Website: [www.unsignedheroes.org](http://www.unsignedheroes.org)



The desktop website layout features a dark grey background. At the top left is the DAV logo. To its right is a navigation menu with links for Home, The Initiative, The Report, and Take Action, followed by social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The main content area is dominated by a large black and white photograph of a woman and a man standing together outdoors. The woman is on the left, wearing a white top, and the man is on the right, wearing a suit and tie, with his arm around her shoulder. Overlaid on the left side of the photo is the text 'THE UNSUNG HEROES INITIATIVE' in large, bold letters, with 'UNSUNG HEROES' in green and 'THE' and 'INITIATIVE' in white. Below this text is a short paragraph: 'Bringing awareness to the challenges and inequities facing America's veteran caregivers.' At the bottom left of the main content area, there are three stacked buttons: 'THE INITIATIVE', 'THE REPORT', and 'TAKE ACTION', each with a green underline.






The mobile website layout is shown on a white smartphone. At the top is the DAV logo and a hamburger menu icon. Below the logo is a video player showing a man in a military uniform speaking at a podium. A name tag in front of him reads 'Commander David W. Rusy'. Below the video player is the section title 'THE UNSUNG HEROES INITIATIVE' in bold. Underneath is a paragraph of text: '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.' At the bottom of the text block is another paragraph: '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'.




# New Caregiver Action Center

**DAV**

Home The Initiative The Report Take Action   

## TAKE ACTION

You can help disabled veterans and their caregivers get the benefits and support they need and deserve.



**SIGN THE PETITION**

Support DAV's Change.org petition calling on Congress and the VA to ensure severely disabled veterans of all eras have equal access to benefits.

**WRITE TO CONGRESS**

Write to your representatives in Congress to support current legislation designed to expand comprehensive caregiver benefits.

**VOLUNTEER WITH DAV**

Donate your time to help disabled veterans and their caregivers in your local area through DAV's Local Veterans Assistance Program.

# New Change.org Caregiver Petition

change.org

Start a petition Browse Membership

Log in

Petitioning [Department of Veteran Affairs](#) and [2 others](#)

## Expand comprehensive caregiver benefits to severely disabled veterans of all generations



Commander Dave Riley and PL+US



Like many husbands, each day begins and ends with my wife, Yvonne. As a former Coast Guard helicopter rescue swimmer and quadruple amputee, I am able to get out of bed every morning and rest comfortably at night because of her. Yvonne is my caregiver—one of America's unsung heroes who takes care of the millions of disabled veterans living in America. **She is why I am urging Congress to extend the Department of Veteran Affairs' (VA) comprehensive caregiver assistance benefits to all disabled veterans of all eras.**

### Sign this petition

14,916 supporters

84 needed to reach 15,000

United States

I'm signing because... (optional)

Share with Facebook friends

Follow the movement

Stay up to date on the broader movement, "Paid Family Leave for Everyone Working in the U.S."



# The Unsung Heroes Initiative Capitol Hill Kick-Off Event



# Renewed DAV CAN Caregiver Push

## Action Alert

### Support Caregiver Expansion

We applaud Senators Patty Murray, Susan Collins, and Representative Jim Langevin for introducing the "Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act" on March 9, 2017. DAV has worked diligently for several years as a part of a larger coalition of veterans... [\[+\] more](#)

## Compose First Message

### Recipients

- US Representative

### Message

#### Subject

#### Body

As your constituent, I write to request your full support and passage of H.R. 1472, the Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act, a bipartisan bill introduced by Representative Langevin that would directly impact the lives of veterans and their caregivers and is a taxpayer-friendly measure.

If enacted, this bill would responsibly and finally make available resources to address the needs of family caregivers of all severely ill and injured veterans. Currently, only caregivers of those injured after September 11, 2001 are eligible. This bill would also improve current supports and services to address unmet needs.

Ultimately, when fully implemented, the bill would improve the lives of tens of thousands of veteran families, and will save the federal government funding that otherwise would need to be spent

Remaining: 9,012

[Customize Your Signature](#) (optional)

## Review Your Profile

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Not John Smith?](#)

### Your Information

Prefix	First Name	Last Name	Suffix
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="John"/>	<input type="text" value="Smith"/>	<input type="text"/>

#### Email

### Home Information

#### Street Address

#### ZIP Code

- I want to receive future email alerts
- Remember me (Uncheck on shared computers)

[Send Message](#)

# Renewed Social Media Push on Caregivers

facebook

twitter



DAV

Just now · 🌐

Right now there is a very real inequality in the veteran community and we're asking for your support in correcting that inequity. Join us as we lobby Congress to grant Caregiver benefits to Caregivers of all generations, because right now only Post 9/11 Caregivers are provided full benefits. Tell Congress to support S.591/H.R.1472!



unsungheroes

MAIN PAGE

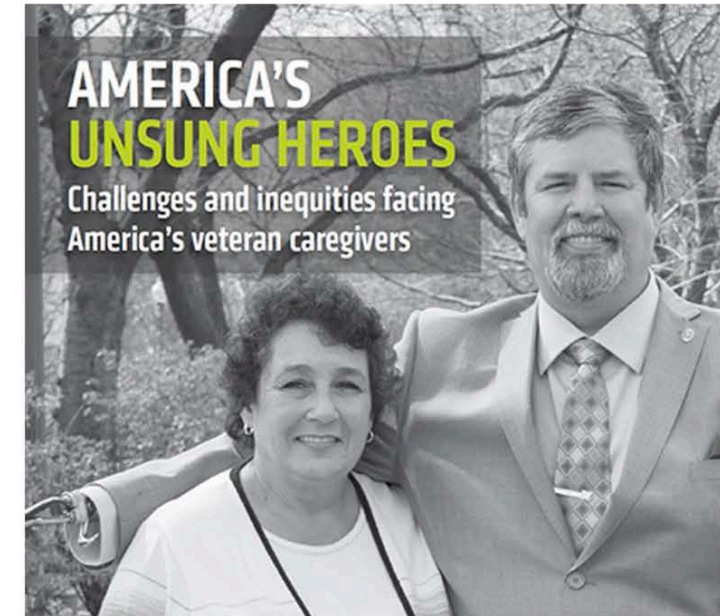
UNSUNGHEROESINITIATIVE.ORG

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share



DAV National HQ @DAVHQ · 7h

Tell @DeptVetAffairs @SecShulkin & @VACHair that ALL #veteran #Caregivers deserve support. Sign the petition at [unsungheroesinitiative.org](https://unsungheroesinitiative.org)



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# Renewed Press Outreach on Caregivers

## 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



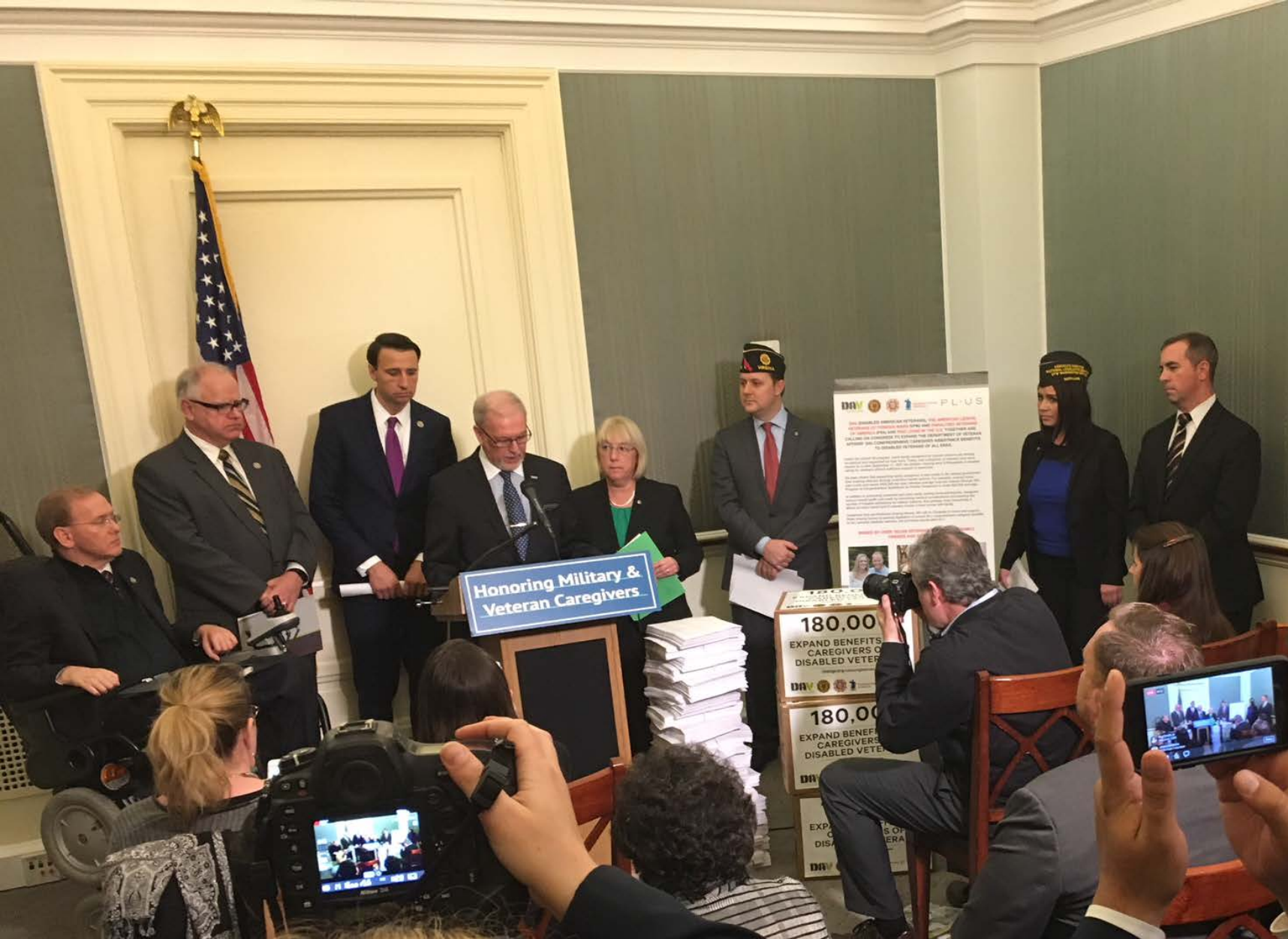
### Veterans caregivers are unsung heroes who need equal benefits

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



# Benefit Protection Teams Taking Action

- *2017 Convention*
  - *Distributed Caregiver Reports to BPTLs*
- *Summer/Fall 2017*
  - *BTPLs Delivered Reports to Senators & Congresspersons*



*DAV Leads Press Conference on Capitol Hill Calling for New Caregiver Legislation and Delivers Petition with 180,000 Signatures December 6, 2017*



*BPTL Don Samuels and  
Department of  
Tennessee Members  
Meet with Congressman  
Phil Roe, Chairman of  
House Veterans' Affairs  
Committee, asking for  
his support of new  
caregiver legislation.  
January 2018*



*DAV testifies before  
House Veterans'  
Affairs Committee  
on New Caregiver  
Legislation  
February 6, 2018*

# Benefit Protection Teams Taking Action

- *2018 Midwinter*
  - *BPTL visits to push caregiver*
  - *Phone Calls to House Leaders*
- *Final Push*
  - *DAV CAN Pressure*
  - *BPTL Targeted Advocacy*
  - *National Caregiver Support Call-In Day*
  - *Senate Press Conference, Dole & Metcalf-Foster Op-Ed*
- ***House Passes 347-70 & Senate Passes 92-5***



***VICTORY!***

*President Trump Signs the VA MISSION Act on May 22, 2018 in a Rose Garden Ceremony.*

***"Success is not final;  
Failure is not fatal:  
It is the **Courage to Continue**  
that counts."***

***- Winston Churchill***



# **P.L. 115-182, VA MISSION Act**

- **HEALTH CARE REFORM**
- **CAREGIVER PROGRAM EXPANSION**
- **INFRASTRUCTURE MODERNIZATION**

Joy Ilem

National Legislative Director





# VA HEALTH CARE REFORM

PL 115-182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018

Joy Ilem

National Legislative Director

# High-Performing Integrated Care Network:

- Choice program to be replaced May 2019
- Establish access standards for care
- Identify demand on VA by local market area
- Assess capacity of: VA, Academic Affiliate, Other Federal providers (DOD, IHS, FQHC, etc., Community Care Network)

# VA Remains Responsible For:

- Establishing access to community care provider network
- Monitor network care and report to Congress
- Informing veterans that care in the community is voluntary
- Ensuring medical appointments are scheduled timely
- Ensuring continuity of veteran's care and services
- Coordinating coverage for veteran's care
- Ensuring no lapse in veteran's care

# ***VA Shall Offer Community Care:***

- VA does not provide the needed care or services
- VA does not have a full-service hospital in the state
- VA does not meet designated access standards
- Veteran and VA clinician agree it is in veteran's best interest
- 40-mile Choice veteran in Alaska, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota
- 40-mile Choice veteran received care in last 12 months and is seeking care over next 24 months

# ***VA May Offer Community Care:***

- VA Service Line does not meet "Quality Standard" of care

# Using Community Care:

- Copayments of community care same as cost of VA care
- VA clinical appeal process available to veterans
- Ensures VA providers removed or suspended from VA practice do not treat veterans in the community
- VA to promptly pay community providers

# Improves VA Health Care System:

- Removes barriers for VA clinicians to practice telemedicine
- Strengthens opioid prescribing by VA and community care providers
- Eliminates barriers to hiring and retaining VA providers
- Strengthens peer-to-peer support for veterans undergoing care for trauma or in rural areas
- Mobile deployment teams for underserved and rural facilities
- Access to Walk-in Clinics for non-emergent episodic care

# VHA INFRASTRUCTURE MODERNIZATION

PL 115-182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018



Peter Dickinson  
Senior Executive Advisor

# Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR)

- Establishes an **Asset and Infrastructure and Review (AIR)** process to develop a long-term plan to modernize and realign VA hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities to improve veterans access to VA care.
- Begins with a capacity/demand assessment by VA, then facility recommendations by VA, a review by an independent Commission, another review by the President and finally a review by Congress.
- The law guarantees that veterans and VSOs will be full participants throughout the AIR process --
  - ❖ **Mandates that Major VSOs Hold 3 of 9 Commission Seats**



# Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR)

- Final version of legislation is significantly different from original bill, which had been similar to BRAC
  - VSOs demanded and got more than 2 dozen changes to law:
    - ❖ Requires 3 Seats on Commission go to Major VSOs
    - ❖ Requires VA to consult with VSOs before making recommendations
    - ❖ Requires all documents and data to be publicly available for review
    - ❖ Requires public hearings if facilities are to be downsized or closed
    - ❖ Extended timeline by 3 years to allow integrated networks to form
    - ❖ Requires that VA request funding to complete all modernizations



# Time Line for Title II of the VA MISSION Act

## ESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION AND CRITERIA: 2018 - 2021

**2018:** The *VA MISSION Act* becomes law, including Title II - the *VA Asset and Infrastructure Review Act*.

**January 3, 2019:** The 116th Congress begins.

**January 3, 2021:** The 117th Congress begins, following 2020 Presidential election.

**February 1, 2021:** The VA submits a draft of criteria to be used in making recommendations regarding the modernization of VA medical facilities for a 90-day public comment period. Criteria will be drafted in consultation with VSO's.

**By May 31, 2021:** After consultation with Congress, the President nominates nine Commissioners to be confirmed by the Senate.

**May 31, 2021:** The VA publishes the final criteria for making recommendations regarding the modernization of VA medical facilities.

## COMMISSION REVIEWS AND REPORTS ON THE VA'S RECOMMENDATIONS: 2022-2023

January 31, 2022: After consultation with VSOs, the VA reports to Congress, the Commission, and the public with its recommendations.

2022 - 2023: The Commission meets to ensure the VA's recommendations substantially comply with the criteria finalized May 31, 2021, examines the recommendations, and holds public hearings. During this time, the Commission can modify the VA's recommendations.

January 3, 2023: The 118th Congress begins.

January 31, 2023: The Commission reports on the VA's recommendations to the President and Congress.

February 15, 2023: The President informs the Commission and Congress of whether he/she approves or disapproves of the Commission's report on the VA's recommendations.



## IMPLEMENTATION OR TERMINATION: 2023 AND BEYOND

March 1, 2023: If disapproved, the President must explain decision to Congress and the Commission. The Commission has 15 days to review and respond.

March 30, 2023: Deadline for the President to approve the Commission's recommendations. If this deadline is not met, the asset review process terminates.

45 Days after the President approves recommendations: Congress may enact a joint resolution of disapproval, terminating the asset review process.

January 3, 2025: The 119th Congress begins, following 2024 Presidential election.

No later than March 2026: The VA begins implementing the Commission's recommendations, subject to available appropriations, after providing detailed information in its budget submission regarding actions to be taken.



# VA CAREGIVER PROGRAM

PL 115-182, the VA MISSION Act of 2018

Adrian Atizado  
Deputy National  
Legislative Director

# What does it do:

- Improves and Expands VA Family Caregiver Program
- Expansion Requires Implementation of Information Technology System

# Additional Services and Supports:

- Financial planning services
- Legal services, including legal advice and consultation

# Modifies Stipend Calculation:

## Improvement for veterans with neurological/cognitive/behavioral injuries

- Must include the family caregiver's assessment of veteran's needs and limitations
- Degree to which the veteran can function safely and independently without family caregiver
- The amount of time family caregiver supervises, protects, or instructs veteran



# If all goes well...

- **September 2018:** Initial report from VA for plan to implement IT system, plan to implement expansion, and resources needed
- **October 2018:** Implementation of new IT system
- **October 2019:** Final report from VA reviewing new IT system, caregiver program, and any program modifications needed
- **October 2019:** *Anticipated* enrollment of veterans severely injured on or before May 7, 1975
- **October 2021:** *Anticipated* enrollment of severely injured veterans of all eras [May 8, 1975—September 10, 2001]



# UPCOMING ELECTIONS

Joy Ilem

National Legislative Director



## **Dos & Don'ts**

FOR MEMBERS DURING ELECTIONYEAR CAMPAIGNS

- **Register and Vote!**
- **Activities as a private citizen must not give the appearance that DAV supports or opposes any political candidate**
- **Do not violate our congressional charter, national Constitution and Bylaws, and the law and regulations governing DAV's tax exempt status.**





## Dos & Don'ts

FOR MEMBERS DURING ELECTION YEAR CAMPAIGNS

- DO** get involved in political campaigns, rallies, forums and town hall meetings—as an individual.
- DON'T** give the appearance that DAV is supporting a particular candidate.
- DO** hold candidate forums or town hall meetings so all candidates can discuss their positions on issues affecting disabled veterans, their families and survivors.





## Dos & Don'ts

FOR MEMBERS DURING ELECTION YEAR CAMPAIGNS



**DO** make candidates aware of the issues facing wounded, injured and ill veterans, their families and survivors.



**DON'T** forget to review DAV's national resolutions to ensure your position is in line DAV's adopted resolutions when speaking on behalf of the organization.



**DON'T** forget our legislative goals focus on the betterment of wartime disabled veterans their families and survivors



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# Thank You!

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