



## VFW PRIORITY GOALS FOR 2014-15

# WHERE VFW STANDS ON THE ISSUES

Listed below are VFW's official positions on current national veterans and security issues.

They are based on national convention resolutions and rated as priorities by their respective committees.

### VA HEALTH CARE

- Provide sufficient, timely and predictable funding for VA.
- Pass full advance appropriations for VA.
- Improve access to VA care and reduce wait times—especially for specialty care—by implementing an updated appointment-making policy.
- Expand telehealth services, especially in rural areas.
- Reimburse VA for care provided to Medicare-eligible veterans.
- Properly fund Defense and VA suicide-and crisis-awareness programs.
- Strengthen mental health, employment counseling, substance abuse and peer support programs.
- Properly fund infrastructure and maintain adequate staffing levels.
- Ensure all non-VA care is high quality and delivered in a timely manner.
- Fully update VA appointment scheduling software and ensure data is not manipulated.
- Sufficiently fund updates to VA's VistA records system.
- Extend VA benefits to vet caregivers of all wars.
- Increase research into women's health care needs, as well as diseases and treatments of toxic exposure.

### VA COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

- Improve quality and timeliness of ratings decisions.
- Enhance training to improve skills of VA employees.
- Approve service connection for Traumatic Brain Injury-related conditions.
- Provide Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC) to survivors of totally disabled vets receiving VA compensation at the time of their deaths.
- Provide adequate resources to meet vets' burial needs.
- Help pass legislation allowing vets to appeal VA decisions without submitting additional evidence.
- Adequately care for homeless veterans.

### TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

- Demand implementation of one integrated electronic medical and service record that is easily accessible for veterans, the military and VA.
- Ensure the military's Transition Assistance Program offers quality information and all relevant government agencies serve as partners in the transition process.

### EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

- Ensure that vets receive proper civilian licenses, credentials or academic credit for applicable military training.
- Protect the *Post-9/11 GI Bill* and military tuition assistance.
- Ensure that veterans are well informed of all post-service educational options.
- Improve federal programs that help veterans find and retain quality post-military careers.
- Ensure that all federal agencies uphold their obligations to hire veterans.

### DEFENSE/HOMELAND SECURITY

- End budget sequestration.
- Ensure defense funding supports quality-of-life programs, training and readiness, troop end-strength and equipment needs. Fully support U.S. troops and their mission to prosecute the war on terrorism, as well as to protect our nation's citizens and interests around the world.
- Halt the development and/or proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, while continuing to develop and deploy a ballistic missile defense system to protect the U.S. and our allies.
- Secure America's borders from all threats, foreign and domestic, and identify and deport illegal aliens who commit crimes.

### MILITARY QUALITY-OF-LIFE

- Protect quality-of-life programs for active-duty troops, reservists and their families.
- Support full concurrent receipt of military retirement pay and VA disability compensation without offset, and regardless of the rating percentage.
- Lower the retirement pay age to 55 for Reserve and National Guard members.
- Eliminate the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset.
- Maintain a comprehensive benefits and retirement package to retain the highest quality troops.

### POW/MIAs

- Achieve the fullest possible accounting of U.S. military personnel missing from all wars.
- Ensure the U.S. government keeps the POW/MIA issue elevated to a national priority.
- Monitor reorganization of POW/MIA effort.