



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

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VFW National Commander Testifies

VFW National Commander Richard DeNoyer testified Wednesday before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees to urge Congress to protect the VA budget should mandatory sequestration occur, and to stop negative Defense Department proposals that would make military dependents and retirees pay exponentially more for their Tricare health programs. His testimony was the final event of the VFW's spring legislative conference that saw hundreds of VFW leaders from every department visiting with their congressional representatives to urge their support of VFW's priority goals. To read DeNoyer's testimony or watch the recorded hearing, [click here](#). Get the list of [VFW 2012 Legislative Priority Goals](#).

VFW Discusses Issues with President

VFW National Commander DeNoyer also met with President Obama on Thursday to discuss issues important to veterans, service members and their families. Topping the agenda was protecting the VA budget and voicing VFW opposition to DOD plans to increase Tricare fees and to civilianize the retirement system. The president has been consistent in word and action on protecting and increasing the VA budget, and he pledged to continue to do so even in these tough budget times. "We gratefully appreciate that commitment," said the Chief. The president also fully agreed that there is no mission more sacred than to recover our fallen from the battlefield and return them home to their families. [Read more](#).

VFW Storms the Hill

As part of the spring legislative conference, hundreds of VFW members stormed Capitol Hill this week to urge their legislators to fund veterans' health care, enhance military transition issues, improve employment, education and job creation for veterans, and protect military healthcare and retirement benefits. Check out photos and postings at www.vfwonthehill.org, which include separate postings by the VFW Departments of Connecticut and Vermont.

TSGLI Benefit for Hospitalized Troops, Veterans

Service members who were hospitalized for at least 15 consecutive days due to a traumatic injury incurred on or after Oct. 7, 2001, may be eligible for a \$25,000 payment under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection (TSGLI) Program. Service members can apply for the hospitalization benefit even if they have been discharged or received TSGLI benefits for other losses. All active, Guard and Reserve members covered by SGLI as of December 1, 2005, are automatically covered by TSGLI, which is a 24/7 benefit both on and off duty. The VFW-supported Veterans Benefit Improvement Act of 2010 expanded TSGLI to cover service members who incurred qualifying losses out of theater between October 7, 2001, and

November 30, 2005. [Click here](#) for more information about the new TSGLI benefit or to apply.

Housing Settlement Benefits Troops, Veterans

Thousands of service members and veterans whose mortgages were wrongfully foreclosed on since 2006, or who were improperly denied lower mortgage interest rates in the national housing crisis, will be eligible for significant relief. Under the \$26 billion settlement, the nation's five largest mortgage lenders—Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, Wells Fargo and Ally Financial [formerly GMAC]—agreed to:

- Review the records of every service member whose home was foreclosed upon since 2006, and provide any who were wrongly foreclosed upon with compensation equal to a minimum of lost equity, plus interest, and at least \$116,785;
- Refund to service members money lost because they were wrongfully denied the opportunity to reduce their mortgage payments through lower interest rates;
- Provide relief for service members who are forced to sell their homes for less than the amount they owed on their mortgage due to permanent change in station orders;
- Pay \$10 million into a VA fund that guarantees loans on favorable terms for veterans; and
- Extend certain foreclosure protections afforded under the Servicemember Civil Relief Act to those serving in harm's way.

Service members and veterans who believe they can take part in the settlement are encouraged to call the Justice Department at 1-800-896-7743. [Read more.](#)

House VA Committee Hearings

On Thursday, the VFW testified at two House VA subcommittee hearings on an array of employment and reemployment bills, and on a recent internal audit of the VA's National Cemetery Administration.

- The Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity took up bills to overhaul how veterans' workforce development programs should be implemented, to protect veterans from workplace discrimination and retribution, and to improve consumer education for student-veterans who use their GI Bill benefits. VFW Deputy Legislative Director Ryan Gallucci expressed support for most of the subcommittee's efforts, highlighting the need to ensure service-disabled veterans could not be discriminated against in the workplace for seeking treatment for their service-connected conditions and improving VA's educational counseling and complaint tracking for student-veterans using the G.I. Bill. [Read VFW testimony.](#) View the [recorded webcast.](#)
- The Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs reviewed a recent audit conducted by the National Cemetery Administration that revealed more than 200 mismarked or unmarked graves in 13 VA cemeteries nationwide. VFW Legislative Director Ray Kelley testified at the hearing, which was a follow-up to a September 2009 discussion in which the Subcommittee examined VA's cemetery policies and operations, as well as those of the other cemeteries under its jurisdiction, to include Arlington National Cemetery and those under the American Battle Monuments Commission. [Read VFW testimony.](#) View the [recorded webcast.](#)

Three MIAs Return Home

The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office recently announced the identification of remains belonging to soldiers from the Korean War and one pilot from World War II. Returned home are:

- **Master Sgt. Elwood Green**, U.S. Army, E Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, was captured on Nov. 28, 1950, and died in 1951 in a

POW Camp in North Korea. He was accounted for on March 1, 2012.

- **Sgt. 1st Class Richard L. Harris**, U.S. Army, L Company, 3rd Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, was captured on Nov. 30, 1950, and died in January 1951 in a POW Camp in North Korea. He was accounted for on Feb. 29, 2012.
- **2nd Lt. Charles R. Moritz**, U.S. Army Air Forces, of the 496th Fighter Training Group, was lost on June 7, 1944, when his P-51C Mustang crashed near Goxhill airfield, England. He was accounted for on Feb. 26, 2012.

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