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The VFW to Testify on Pending Legislation

The VFW is scheduled to testify before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity on Wednesday, April 10 at 10 a.m. in room 334 of the Cannon House Office Building. VFW Deputy Legislative Director Ryan Gallucci plans to present the VFW's views on veterans' legislation pending before the subcommittee. He'll address issues like education, training opportunities, employment, rehabilitation and homelessness. The subcommittee will post additional information about the hearing early next week. Tune in to the hearing LIVE on Wednesday at 10 a.m., by [clicking here](#). The VFW also created an [event](#) on Facebook for the hearing.

Veterans' Committee to Hear VA Budget Proposal

Next Thursday, VA leaders will present the President's FY2014 budget proposal for VA to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. The VFW, which presented its FY2014 budget analysis in January as part of the Independent Budget, will offer our response to the President's budget early next week on [vfw.org](#). Tune in to next week's hearing LIVE on Thursday at 10 a.m., by [clicking here](#). Read the FY2014 [Independent Budget](#).

Pentagon Opposes Fort Hood Purple Hearts

In a position paper addressed to Rep. John Carter (R-Texas), whose district includes Fort Hood, the Pentagon is again opposing the award of the Purple Heart to the 13 dead and 32 wounded by alleged shooter Maj. Nidal Hasan on Nov. 5, 2009. According to ABC News, the position paper says awarding the Purple Hearts "will be viewed as setting the stage for a formal declaration that Major Hasan is a terrorist," and that, in turn, will allow Defense counsel to "argue that Major Hasan cannot receive a fair trial because a branch of government has indirectly declared that Major Hasan is a terrorist." The congressman wants the Fort Hood victims to receive the same status that was awarded to 9/11 Pentagon casualties, who received the Purple Heart or the DOD civilian equivalent. Purple Hearts were also denied for the two Army privates who were shot outside a

Little Rock, Ark., military recruiting center on June 1, 2009. Pvt. Andy Long's killer, Abdulhakim Muhammad, pled guilty, and is now serving life in prison without the possibility of parole. [Read more](#) about Fort Hood, to include a link to the Pentagon position paper.

Secretary Hagel Says Difficult Decisions to Come

This week, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel delivered his first major speech as Secretary of Defense at National Defense University in Washington. In his speech, Hagel explained that, under his leadership, the Pentagon would need to reevaluate how it handled and prioritized personnel and readiness programs, making difficult decisions along the way. The VFW has been a strong advocate for maintaining military personnel, readiness, and quality-of-life programs, most recently fighting to maintain military Tuition Assistance. The VFW will watch closely as the Pentagon looks to transform the force, persistently advocating to save programs affecting service members and their quality of life. [Learn more](#) about Secretary Hagel's speech.

Pentagon Expands Valor Website

The Defense Department announced in late March that it had expanded its valor website to include Medal of Honor recipients from actions prior to Sept. 11, 2001. To the VFW, it's only the beginning of a much longer process that DOD must undertake to properly document for posterity the medals it awards, and to help expose Stolen Valor frauds. Once complete, [the site](#) will also include all Service Cross recipients, but only those Silver Star recipients awarded after Sept. 11, 2001. That's not good enough. Plus, hyperlinks to medal citations are noticeably absent. A much more thorough listing is available at [Military Times Hall of Valor](#), which is maintained to an exceptionally high degree of accuracy by Vietnam veteran and fellow VFW life-member, Doug Sterner, and his wife, Pam, based entirely on open source documentation. Hopefully the passage of VFW-supported legislation (H.R. 258/S. 210) to create a new Stolen Valor Act of 2013 will force DOD into properly documenting the medals and combat badges it awards.

WWII Airman Identified

The Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains belonging to Army Air Forces 1st Lt. John E. Terping, of Mount Prospect, Ill. On May 7, 1944, Terping was the pilot of a B-24D Liberator that departed New Guinea on a bombing mission. Due to mechanical troubles, the aircraft was delayed in departing the airbase and was unable to join the formation after takeoff. Neither the aircraft nor its 10-man crew were seen again after takeoff. [Read more](#).

As always, we want to share your advocacy stories on the VFW Capitol Hill blog. To share your stories, either [fill out our online form](#) or simply email photos and stories directly to vfwac@vfw.org.

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