



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

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The VFW Testifies on VA Construction Process

This week, the VFW testified before the House VA Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, discussing shortcomings in VA's construction planning process. A recent GAO report that found discrepancies in costs and delays averaging 35 months on critical medical facility projects was also debated. Our testimony centered on how VA could deliver new medical facilities in a timely manner with more accurate cost projections. As the author of the IB section on VA major and minor construction, we shared our thoughts on how VA should develop a master plan for major medical construction projects, to include forecasting future needs for veterans in certain areas. Other witnesses concluded that the process VA uses to build its healthcare facilities has to be changed in order to avoid delays in caring for veterans. We will continue monitoring and working with all parties to ensure that major healthcare facilities can be delivered in a timely manner to meet the healthcare needs of all veterans. For the hearing specifics or to view the archived webcast, [click here](#). Learn more about VA's major and minor construction needs in [the IB](#).

House Committee Clears Veterans Bills

Earlier this week, the House VA committee cleared six pieces of veterans' legislation. All of the bills now move to the House floor for consideration and debate. Some of the VFW-supported bills included:

H.R. 671, *The Ruth Moore Act*, was amended to include more stringent reporting requirements for VA, which the committee hopes will pressure VA to update and improve its sexual trauma regulations. The VFW was disappointed that the bill did not require a law change to align MST claims with combat PTSD regulations.

H.R. 357, included the original provision, which requires public universities to charge only what is equal to in-state tuition for veterans and includes a controversial amendment banning bonuses for senior VA executives for five years. It also contains provisions of six other bills, including H.R. 1405, H.R. 1305, H.R. 844 H.R. 631, H.R. 562 and H.R. 1453.

H.R. 844, which extends the eligibility period for veterans enrolling in vocational rehabilitation programs from 12 years following discharge to 17 years.

For complete coverage of all the related bills, visit the [House VA website](#). For the VFW's April testimony on the bills, [click here](#).

Senate VA Committee Discusses Healthcare Bills

The Senate Veterans Affairs' Committee held a lengthy bill hearing examining a variety of healthcare bills. Many of the bills would expand or extend existing programs for veterans and their families. The VFW provided testimony for the record and gave our support to:

S. 851, which would expand the caregiver program and extend these services and benefits to the caregivers of veterans of all eras.

S. 825, *Homeless Veterans Prevention Act*, would improve and expand homeless programs within VA.

S. 131, *Women Veterans and Other Health Improvements Act*, would advance VA programs for women veterans and their families by offering reproductive and fertility services for service-connected veterans, as well as requiring VA, DOD and IOM to collaborate on research to improve the long-term reproductive health needs of veterans. It also would provide childcare assistance and readjustment counseling in retreat settings for those seeking mental health services.

S. 422, *Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act*, would require VA to establish programs for chiropractic care and services in at least 75 medical centers by December 2014.

For more on the hearing, including testimony and the recorded webcast, [click here](#). [Read](#) the VFW's submitted testimony.

Two MIAs Identified

The Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains belonging to:

- Army Sgt. William C. Knight, 20, of West Brookfield, Mass. In late November 1950, Knight and elements of the Headquarters Battery, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 31st Regimental Combat Team, known historically as Task Force Faith, began a fighting withdrawal to a more defensible position south of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. Knight would be reported missing during the withdrawal.
- Navy Lt. Richard L. Laws, 26, of West Sacramento, Calif. On April 3, 1966, Laws was strafing enemy targets in Thanh Hoa Province, North Vietnam, when his F-8E Crusader was struck by enemy ground fire. His mission commander saw his aircraft crash into a nearby hillside and explode. As a result, Laws would be declared killed in action/body not recovered.

[Read more](#) about their individual recoveries.

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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