



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

# WASHINGTON WEEKLY



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## VFW to Attend Both Conventions

VFW will be represented at the upcoming Republican National Convention in Tampa next week and the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte in early September to ensure the voice of veterans, service members and their families is not lost during Campaign 2012. Leading both delegations will be VFW Legislative Director Ray Kelley. Stay informed throughout by reading their [blog postings](#).

## President Signs USERRA Bill

Recently, the President signed VFW-supported legislation (H.R.3670) which requires the Transportation Security Administration to comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). VFW was instrumental in getting the bill introduced and [offered testimony](#) in support of the legislation before the House VA Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity in March. VFW legislative associate Daniel Elkins, who currently serves in the National Guard, spearheaded efforts to find cosponsors for the bill, which helped to push the legislation through Congress. For more details about the bill, visit our [Capitol Hill Blog](#).

## New TRICARE Prime Rates Announced

On Oct. 1, military retirees will see their TRICARE Prime enrollment fees increase to \$269.28 for singles and \$538.56 for families. The increase reflects the 3.6% cost-of-living adjustment retirees received in 2012, when applied to the FY 2012 enrollment fee of \$260 (single) and \$520 (families). Retirees enrolled in TRICARE Prime prior to Oct. 1, 2011, will see a more significant increase because their enrollment fees were held at previous levels of \$230 and \$460, respectively. Survivors of active duty deceased sponsors and medically retired members and their dependents are exempt from annual fee increases as long as there is no break in their TRICARE Prime enrollment. Active duty service members and their families have no enrollment fee. [Read more](#).

## **VFW Speaks at Joint DoD / VA Airborne Hazards Symposium**

Tuesday marked the opening of the first-of-its-kind gathering of DoD and VA officials to discuss airborne hazards. The closed-door conference will evaluate available data related to exposures sustained in Iraq and Afghanistan, and debate how we should move forward to improve our diagnosis and treatment of these conditions. VFW was on hand for the opening session of the invitation-only event to discuss the available scientific data released by an Institute of Medicine report last year and the impact these conditions have on veterans. Without this and other efforts to tackle this issue, veterans with serious unseen respiratory health conditions will go unresolved. VFW will continue to advocate on behalf of affected veterans and provide more information on an ongoing basis.

## **VFW Joins Roundtable Discussion on Education**

VFW joined education industry experts, congressional staffers, and veterans' advocates from Student Veterans of America for a roundtable discussion on veterans' education as part of the American Legion's national convention in Indianapolis this week. VFW Deputy Legislative Director Ryan Gallucci was invited to participate in the roundtable discussion, which sought to identify issues faced by student-veterans pursuing an education with the Post-9/11 GI Bill in an effort to build consensus on how to improve educational decision-making for today's veterans. To learn about the roundtable and VFW's continued work helping to protect student-veterans, [click here](#).

## **National POW/MIA Day is Sept. 21**

National POW/MIA Recognition Day observances are held nationwide the third Friday of every September in military installations, ships at sea, state capitals, schools, VA facilities, and VFW Posts. The observance is one of only six days—the others are Armed Forces, Memorial, Flag, Independence and Veterans Days—that the flying of the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag is required on all federal buildings and installations, though many government agencies voluntarily fly the POW/MIA Flag 24/7. Hundreds of copies of the 2012 National POW/MIA Recognition Day poster were distributed at the 113th VFW National Convention last month. That poster is now only available for [download](#).

## **WWII Airman Recovered**

The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains belonging to Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. John E. Hogan, 20, of West Plains, Mo. On Sept. 13, 1944, Hogan and eight other crewmembers were aboard a B-17G Flying Fortress that crashed near Neustaedt-on-Werra, Germany. Only one was able to successfully parachute out of the aircraft. [Read more](#) about his recovery.

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