

Comrades, as your NH VFW Representative on the VFW **National Legislative Committee** I am passing this current legislative information on to our members.

First, I am horrified and angered by the events of last week when deranged killers caused great harm, pain and anguish when they killed and maimed innocent people in the course of their daily lives.

I don't blame the killers weapons. I blame the killers. We can take all the guns off the planet and those sick people will hack or stab or club you down or blow you up with another weapon. Gun free zones definitely don't work, they only invite the deranged people to do their dirty work where they think no one is armed. Self defense is the only defense that is a proven deterrent. We as US Veterans all went through basic training for just that purpose.

We as a Nation owe it to the victims and their families and to us law abiding Veterans who cherish our right to bear arms to come up with a solution to spot these deranged individuals and stop them in their tracks as soon as they are identified as an immediate threat to life and liberty.

My heart and prayers go to all the victims and their families, may we quickly come to a sensible solution to this tragic recurring horror.

Below is the official list of our 2019 VFW Priority Goals, and below that are notices I received of Democratic Presidential Candidates visits to NH this August, and the Hillsborough County Republicans Meeting agenda.

Just as a reminder, the VFW is politically neutral, we support no party or candidate. As VFW members, it is our duty to participate in all political activities that you are interested in. Display your VFW cap or badge to let people know that you are in the VFW and that you vote. You cannot speak on behalf of the VFW, but you can express your own views and opinions as a VFW member. And don't forget to report your political activities in your post reports at <http://nh.vfwportal.net>

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Our 2019 VFW Priority Goals:

• Budget

- Reform the dysfunctional federal budget process and end sequestration.
 - Authorize VA to receive reimbursements from TRICARE and Medicare.
 - Ensure the POW/MIA Accounting mission is fully funded.
 - Never reduce one veteran's benefits to pay for another.
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○ Health Care

- Properly implement the *VA MISSION Act of 2018*.
 - Reduce the number of service members and veterans who die by suicide.
 - Preserve the integrity of TRICARE.
 - Modernize VA and DOD health IT systems.
 - Strengthen health care and research for mental health and traumatic brain injuries (TBI).
 - Expand gender-specific programs and competencies.
 - Research and effectively treat health conditions associated with toxic exposures.
 - Prevent the increase of pharmaceutical copayments and remove copayment requirements for preventive medicines.
 - Research the efficacy of medical cannabis.
 - Expand telehealth services.
 - Make nursing home eligibility part of the VA health care benefits package.
 - Keep community care reimbursement rates competitive with private health insurance
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○ Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs

- Properly implement the modernized appeals process.
 - Consider treatment of presumptive conditions as a claim for disability compensation.
 - Establish presumptive disability compensation benefits for hearing loss, tinnitus, TBI, and for health conditions associated with toxic exposures.
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- Increase burial allowances to account for inflation and include spouses' information on all headstones.
- Authorize more than one adaptive automotive grant for disabled veterans.
- Reform the Gulf War Illness Disability Benefits Questionnaire.
- Transfer the control of the Mare Island Naval Cemetery to NCA.
- Update regulations and laws governing claims to account for digital claims processing.
- Expand VA wartime benefits to early Vietnam veterans.

- **Education, Employment and Transition Assistance**

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- High-quality and sustainable education benefits.
 - Strong employment and training programs.
 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment services throughout their lifetime.
 - Small business development opportunities.
 - Civilian credentials or academic credit for military training.
 - Hiring preferences in the civil service and with large government contractors.
 - National veterans treatment court advocates.
 - Education and training in new and expanding career fields.
 - Timely and improved transition assistance including access to programs for veterans after they leave military service.
 - Affordable housing and wraparound services to avoid homelessness.
 - Equitable education benefits for dependents regardless of where they live.
 - Improved character of discharge review and appeals procedures.

- **Military Quality of Life**

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- Increase military base pay comparability with private sector wages.
 - Protect and improve on-base quality of life programs.
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- Ensure that military housing is safe and free of toxic substances.
- End the military retirement pay and VA disability compensation offset.
- Eliminate the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset.
- Increase the government's Thrift Savings Plan contribution.
- Eliminate sexual assaults in the military.
- Establish the Armed Forces University.
- Improve stability and support for military families.

- National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW/MIA

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- Expand partnerships with host nations and private/public organizations to achieve the fullest possible accounting of U.S. military personnel missing from all wars.
 - Secure America's borders.
 - Preserve the all-volunteer force.
 - Maintain a substantial military presence in the Republic of Korea.
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