

## National Committee Report CoA Oct. 2022

**\*H.R.3967 - Honoring our PACT Act of 2021 (100 Cosponsors: Cicilline/Langevin, Passed House, 3-3-22 Signed By President 8-10-22**

“Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021” To improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes (SVAC)

**\*S.3003 - Comprehensive and Overdue Support for Troops of War Act of 2021 (0 Cosponsors) (SVAC) S. 952 Reed Cosponsor. Signed By President 8-10-22**

“COST of War Act of 2021”

**\*H.R. 3402 –Caring for Survivors Act of 2021(70 Cosponsors, Cicilline of our Congressmen)(HVAC)** This bill increases the monthly rate of dependency and indemnity compensation payable to surviving spouses through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The bill also adjusts the amount payable to surviving spouses and children of veterans who were rated as totally disabled for a period of less than 10 years before their death.

**\*S.976 - Caring for Survivors Act of 2021(13 Cosponsors, Whitehouse of our Senators) (SVAC)**

**\*H.R.5666 - Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2021 (21 Cosponsors, Neither of our Congressmen)(HVAC)** This bill modifies and implements policies and procedures related to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care and benefits for veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma (MST), which is generally defined as physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment that occurred while the veteran was serving in the military.

**\*S.3025 - Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2021 (1 Cosponsor, Neither of our Senators) (SVA)**

**\*H.R.1282 - Major Richard Star Act (328 Cosponsors, Cicilline & Langevin) (HASC & HVAC)**

This bill provides that combat-disabled uniformed services retirees with fewer than 20 years of creditable service may concurrently receive, without reduction, veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation. (

**\*S.344 - Major Richard Star Act (66 Cosponsors, Whitehouse) (SVAC)**

this bill allows a veteran with a combat-related disability and fewer than 20 years of creditable service to receive retirement pay, without reduction, concurrent with disability compensation.

**S.1291 - Record of Military Service for Members of the Armed Forces Act of 2021 (6 Cosponsors, Neither of our Senator) (SASC)**

This bill requires the Department of Defense (DOD) to create the Certificate of Military Service. The Certificate of Military service will be a standard record of military service for all members of active and reserve components of the armed forces to encompass all duty, including that of National Guard and Coast Guard duty.

Under the bill, the document must (1) be standardized, (2) be the same for all members of the armed forces, and (3) replace and serve the same function as a discharge certificate or certificate of release (DOD Form DD-214).

The bill also requires that a current record of service be issued to members of the reserve components upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

- permanent change to duty status (e.g., retirement or transfer to active duty),
- discharge or release from temporary active duty orders,
- specified promotions, and
- transfer to another state National Guard.

**S.1093 - A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes. (3 Cosponsor, Whitehouse of our Senators)(SVAC)**

This bill establishes the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration to administer economic opportunity assistance programs for veterans and their dependents and survivors.

Specifically, the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration must administer the following Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs:

- vocational rehabilitation and employment programs,
- educational assistance programs,
- veterans' housing loan and related programs,
- the Transition Assistance Program, and
- the database of small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans.

Prior to the transfer of administrative responsibilities, the bill requires the VA to certify that (1) the transition of the provision of services will not negatively affect the provision of such services to veterans, and (2) such services are ready to be transferred.

**H.R.2335 - VET TEC Enhancement Act of 2021 (6 Cosponsors, neither of our Representatives)(HVAC)**

This bill increases the amount authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) High Technology Pilot Program from \$45 million to \$125 million for FY2022 and each succeeding year. The High Technology Pilot Program provides eligible veterans with the opportunity to enroll in high technology programs of education that the VA determines provide training or skills sought by employers in a relevant field or industry.

**S.2644 - GRAD VA Educational Assistance Parity Act of 2021 (3 Cosponsors, Neither of our Senators) (SVAC)**

This Act may be cited as the “Guard, Reserve, and Active Duty Department of Veterans Affairs Educational Assistance Parity Act of 2021” or the “GRAD VA Educational Assistance Parity Act of 2021”

It would amend title 38, United States Code, to expand eligibility for Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to members of the National Guard who perform certain full-time duty, and for other purposes.

**\*H.R.1361 - Advancing Uniform Transportation Opportunities for Veterans Act or the AUTO for Veterans Act (71 Cosponsors, Both of our Congressmen)**

This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide (or assist in providing) an eligible veteran or service member with an additional automobile or other conveyance under the VA automobile allowance and adaptive equipment program. Currently, a veteran or service member with a specified service-connected disability or impairment may not receive more than one automobile or other conveyance under the program.

The bill authorizes the additional benefit for such veterans and service members if 10 years have passed since the person last received such benefit. (HVAC)

**\*S.444 - Advancing Uniform Transportation Opportunities for Veterans Act or the AUTO for Veterans Act (16 Cosponsors, Whitehouse of our Senators)(SVAC)**

This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide (or assist in providing) an eligible veteran or service member with an additional automobile or other conveyance under the VA automobile allowance and adaptive equipment program. Currently, a veteran or service member with a specified service-connected disability or impairment may not receive more than one automobile or other conveyance under the program.

The bill authorizes the additional benefit for such veterans and service members if 10 years have passed since the person last received such benefit.

### **H.R.3575 - Vet Center Improvement Act of 2021(Congressman Cicilline Introduced 5 Cosponsors, No Congressman Langevin) (HVAC)**

This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to evaluate productivity expectations for readjustment counselors of Vet Centers, including by obtaining feedback from counselors that must be audited annually for five years by the Government Accountability Office.

The VA must also (1) develop and implement a staffing model for Vet Centers, (2) standardize descriptions of position responsibilities at Vet Centers, and (3) award grants to address food insecurity among veterans and family members of veterans who receive services through Vet Centers or other VA facilities

### **S.1944 - Vet Center Improvement Act of 2021(Senator Reed introduced 1 Cosponsor, No Senator Whitehouse) (SVAC)**

To improve Vet Centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

### **H.R.5575 - VA Nurse and Physician Assistant RAISE Act, (5 Cosponsors, Cicilline of our Congressmen) (HVAC-MARKUP)**

To amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the rate of pay for certain nurses and other medical positions of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

### **H.R.4673 - Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act PASSED HOUSE, NOW IN SENATE (SVAC)**

**Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act or the EVEST Act** This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to automatically enroll veterans who are eligible for VA health care into the VA health care system upon the receipt of information from the Defense Manpower Data Center of the Department of Defense that proves eligibility of such veterans for enrollment.

The VA must provide a veteran notice that the veteran has been enrolled, instructions on how the veteran may elect to opt out of such enrollment, and instructions for how such veteran may elect to enroll at a later date.

Notice or instructions must be provided in a physical copy and, as is practical, in an electronic copy. Additionally, the VA must consider using mass texting capabilities to provide the notice and relevant instructions required by this bill. The provisions of the bill apply to veterans who are discharged or separated from the Armed Forces on or after the date that is 90 days before this bill's enactment.

Any veteran who is eligible for automatic enrollment must be able to access an electronic version of the certificate of eligibility and an electronic mechanism to opt out of such enrollment.

The Government Accountability Office must report on the best methods for the VA to provide notice regarding a veteran's automatic enrollment in the VA health care system and related instructions.

### **H.R.239 - Equal Access to Contraception for Veterans Act, PASSED HOUSE, NOW IN SENATE (76 Cosponsors, Congressman Cicilline, No Congressman Langevin)(SVAC) Companion S.3025**

This bill prohibits the Department of Veterans Affairs from requiring payment from a veteran for any contraceptive item that is required to be covered by health insurance plans without a cost-sharing requirement.

## **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **Senator Reed Committee assignments:**

- \*Committee on Armed Services (Chairman)  
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities. ...
- \*Committee on Appropriations.  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies. ...
- Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. ...
- Select Committee on Intelligence (ex officio)

### **Senator Whitehouse committee assignments:**

- \*Committee on Budget.  
Committee on Environment and Public Works.  
Subcommittee on Oversight. ...
- \*Committee on Finance.  
Committee on the Judiciary.  
United States Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control (Chair)  
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

### **Congressman Langevin committee assignments:**

- \*House Armed Services Committee Cyber, Innovative Technologies, and Information Systems  
Subcommittee (Chairman)  
Seapower and Projection Forces
- \*Strategic Forces  
House Committee on Homeland Security  
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection  
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications

### **Congressman Cicilline committee assignment:**

[Judiciary Committee](#)

\*[Foreign Affairs Committee](#)

Chairman, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial and Administrative Law  
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security  
Subcommittee on Judiciary  
Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations  
Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment  
Subcommittee on Middle East, North Africa, and International Terrorism

Respectfully Submitted,

John P Gallo Sr., RI Member  
VFW National Legislative Committee  
Cell: (401) 573-7057  
Email: [johnlqq@cox.net](mailto:johnlqq@cox.net)