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In This Issue:

- 1. VFW Testifies on Economic Opportunity Legislation**
- 2. Bataan/Corregidor Congressional Gold Medal Proposed**
- 3. Legislation to Establish New Agent Orange Presumptive Conditions Introduced**
- 4. Congressional Oversight of VA MISSION Act**
- 5. VFW Members Visit President**
- 6. MIA Update**

1. VFW Testifies on Economic Opportunity Legislation: This week the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing to discuss pending legislation. VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director Pat Murray testified regarding many pieces of VFW-supported legislation. Some of the bills introduced and discussed pertained to the VFW's legislative [2019 Priority Goals](#). Issues like reforming transition, creating new oversight for VA programs, eliminating barriers within VA's Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment program, expanding programs for homeless veterans, and ending inequities for the Fry Scholarship and others were discussed during the hearing. The VFW thanks Chairman Levin and Ranking member Bilirakis for their steadfast leadership of the subcommittee and we are encouraged by their bipartisan efforts to help push for important veterans issues. [Watch the hearing](#) or [read the testimony](#).

2. Bataan/Corregidor Congressional Gold Medal Proposed: Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) this week introduced S. 1093 to award the Congressional Gold Medal — Congress's highest recognition of appreciation — to the defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, who just hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor became the first to fire upon the Imperial Japanese Army as they invaded the then-U.S. territory of the Philippines. In an opinion editorial published Tuesday, the 77th anniversary of the fall of Bataan, Senator Udall and VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence wrote that "what came next for the troops is almost unspeakable: months of unrelenting combat, a 65-mile death march and, for survivors, three years of gruesome imprisonment. Too few returned home after the war, and with each passing year, even fewer remain to tell their harrowing and heroic stories. We must honor these heroes — before it is too late. [Read the opinion editorial](#)."

3. Legislation to Establish New Agent Orange Presumptive Conditions Introduced: Recent [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine reports](#) have found an association between exposure to Agent Orange and bladder cancer, hypertension, and Parkinson's-like symptoms. This week, Representatives Westerman (R-Ark.), Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.), Tipton (D-Calif.), Stefanik (R-N.Y.), Cunningham (D-S.C.), Boyle (D-Pa.), Thompson (D-Calif.) and Kuster (D-N.H.) introduced H.R. 2201, the VFW-supported *Keeping Our Promises Act*, which adds the new conditions to the [list of conditions](#) presumed to be associated with Agent Orange

exposure. Adding these conditions to the list would provide veterans exposed to Agent Orange an expedited avenue for care and compensation benefits. The bill would also force VA to evaluate and make a decision on future recommendations. Learn more about the [Keeping Our Promises Act](#). Stay tuned to the VFW Action Corps Weekly for updates on this important bill.

4. Congressional Oversight of VA MISSION Act: In the past two weeks, the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs held hearings to conduct oversight of VA's plan to implement the VFW-supported *VA MISSION Act of 2018*. The House hearing focused on a recent U.S. Digital Service review of VA's IT software, which found deficiencies that could affect VA's ability to deploy certain IT programs on time. VA Veterans Health Administration Executive-in-Charge Dr. Richard Stone confirmed that VA is on pace to fully implement the new [Veterans Community Care Program](#), which will replace the current [Veterans Choice Program](#), and that VA will be able to address possible implementation issues as they arise. Committee members expressed concerns with VA's ability to seamlessly implement the new program and VA's new access standards. Watch the [Senate Hearing](#). Watch the [House hearing](#).

5. VFW Members Visit President: At the 119th VFW National Convention in Kansas City last July, then-94-year-old World War II veteran Allen Jones asked President Trump if he could visit the Oval Office on his 95th birthday. Yesterday, the president made good on his promise, and invited three other WWII veterans to join Jones, who is a Life member of VFW Post 21 in Connellsville, Pa. The three other WWII veterans were 100-year-old Sidney Walton of San Diego, 101-year-old Floyd Wigfield, of Cumberland, Md., and 103-year-old Paul Kriner, a Life member of VFW Post 1599 of Chambersburg, Pa. [Watch video of their visit](#).

6. MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced burial dates of four previously unaccounted-for service members from World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Returned home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Army Cpl. Benjamin W. Scott**, 19, of Alamo, Miss., will be buried April 13 in Atwood, Tenn. In July 1950, Scott was a member of Company M, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, engaged in combat actions against North Korean forces in the vicinity of Choch'iwon, South Korea. Scott was declared missing in action July 12, 1956. [Read more about Scott](#).

-- **Navy Reserve Journalist 3rd Class Raul A. Guerra**, 24, of Montebello, Calif., will be buried April 25 in Whittier, Calif. On Oct. 8, 1967, Guerra was a passenger aboard an E-1B Tracer en route from Chu Lai Air Base to the aircraft carrier USS Oriskany. Radar contact was lost with the aircraft approximately 10 miles northwest of Da Nang, South Vietnam, and adverse weather hampered subsequent search efforts. [Read more about Guerra](#).

-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Walter B. Stone**, 24, will be buried May 11 in his hometown of Andalusia, Ala. On Oct. 22, 1943, Stone was assigned to the 350th Fighter Squadron, 353rd Fighter Group. He was killed when his P-47 Thunderbolt aircraft crashed in northern France during a bomber escort mission. Because France was enemy-occupied territory at the time of the crash, search and recovery operations were not possible. [Read more about Stone](#).

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class Herbert J. Poindexter Jr.**, 24, will be buried June 21 in his hometown of Jacksonville, Fla. On Dec. 7, 1941, Poindexter was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which capsized after sustaining multiple torpedo as it was moored at Ford Island in

Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmembers, including Poindexter. [Read about Poindexter here.](#)

To sign up new veterans' advocates, visit: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>.

As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to vfwac@vfw.org.

To view this week's and previous editions, visit: <http://www.vfw.org/actioncorpsweekly>.