

Legislative Victories

The VFW played an instrumental role in virtually every significant piece of veterans' legislation passed in the 20th century, as well as bills enacted in the 21st century. Note: In each case, this is the year an act was passed or an institution established.

For more information, contact the VFW National Legislative Service at vfwac@vfw.org.

- 1917 War Risk Insurance Act Amendments
- 1918 Vocational Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 178)
- 1919 Census Act Rider on Veterans Preference Discharge Allowance
- 1920 Widows and Orphans Pension Act (Spanish-America War)
- 1921 Veterans Bureau Act
- 1923 Veterans Preference Point System
- 1924 House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
World War Adjusted Compensation Act
- 1925 Senate Subcommittee on Veterans' Affairs
- 1926 Spanish-American War benefits
New Johnson Act (WWI benefits)
- 1930 Veterans Administration (VA) World War Service Disability Pension Act (P.L. 522)
- 1931 Bacharach Amendment (P.L. 743) allows borrowing on WWI bonus certificates
- 1933 Wagner-Peyser Act: Veterans Employment Service
- 1934 Pension for widows of WWI vets
- 1936 VFW congressional charter signed by President Roosevelt
Bonus bonds (\$2.4 billion) to WWI vets redeemable
- 1938 Armistice Day (Nov. 11) legal holiday
- 1940 National Service Life Insurance
Selective Service & Training Act
- 1943 Benefits to WWII veterans (P.L. 10)
Disabled Veterans Rehabilitation Act
- 1944 GI Bill of Rights (P.L. 346)
Veterans Preference Act
- 1946 Veteran Emergency Housing Act
- 1947 Bureau of Veterans Re-employment Rights (BVRR)
- 1950 Vocational Rehabilitation Act
- 1951 Servicemen's Indemnity & Insurance
- 1952 Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (Korean War GI Bill)
- 1954 Veterans Compensation Act
Nov. 11 declared as Veterans Day (P.L. 380)
- 1962 Veterans Benefits Act (Cold War GI Bill)
- 1966 Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act (P.L. 89-358) (Vietnam War GI Bill)
- 1970 Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
- 1972 Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act

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- 1973 Federal court agrees veterans preference applies to state jobs
- 1974 Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (vocational rehabilitation)
- 1976 Veterans Education & Employment Assistance Act
- 1977 Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance Act
- 1978 Veterans preference preserved
 - Veterans & Survivors Pension Improvement Act
 - Veterans Day returned to Nov. 11
- 1979 Vietnam Veterans Outreach Program (creates Vet Centers)
- 1980 VFW calls for Agent Orange study
 - Veterans Rehabilitation & Education Amendments
- 1981 Former POW Benefits Act
 - Veterans Health Care, Training & Small Business Loan Act
- 1982 Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS)
 - Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedicated
- 1983 Emergency Veterans Job-Training Act
- 1984 Montgomery GI Bill Veterans Dioxin & Radiation Exposure Compensation Standards Act (P.L. 98-542): Agent Orange & Atomic Exposure
- 1987 New GI Bill Continuation Act
- 1988 Radiation-Exposed Veterans Compensation Act
 - Department of Veterans Affairs Act
 - Veterans Judicial Review Act
- 1989 VA becomes a Cabinet department Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims
- 1990 Agent Orange service-connection
- 1991 Agent Orange Act (P.L. 102-4)
 - Persian Gulf War Veterans Assistance Act (P.L. 102-25)
- 1992 Veterans Health Care Act
- 1996 Veterans Health Care Eligibility Reform Act
- 1999 Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act
- 2003 Concurrent receipt for military retirees rated 50% disabled or more
- 2004 Full concurrent receipt for military retirees rated 100% disabled
 - Traumatic Injury Insurance supplemental created
- 2005 Protestors banned from military funerals
 - Stolen Valor Act signed into law
- 2006 VFW calls for VA/military health care system review after Walter Reed outpatient debacle
- 2008 Record VA discretionary budget approved
 - GI Bill for the 21st Century signed into law
- 2009 Advance Appropriations for VA becomes law
- 2010 Family Caregiver Legislation signed into law
 - Ensured all VA and DOD health care programs met minimum health care coverage standards
- 2011 VOW to Hire Heroes Act
 - VFW stopped TRICARE premiums from increasing annually
- 2012 Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act
 - Extended USERRA protections to veterans working for TSA
- 2013 Reinstated military Tuition Assistance programs
 - New Stolen Valor Act signed into law
 - Stopped Creation of Distinguished Warfare Medal (Drone Medal)
- 2014 Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014
 - In-State Tuition for Post-9/11 GI Bill eligible veterans
 - Advance Appropriations for VA Benefits
- 2015 Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act
 - Eliminated 1 percent COLA reduction penalty on future military retirees
 - Created government match to military Thrift Savings Plan accounts

- 2016 Toxic Exposure Research Act to evaluate impact on descendants
Enhanced fertility treatment and adoption services
- 2017 Forever GI Bill gives veterans a lifetime to use GI Bill benefits
Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017
VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act
Global War on Terrorism Memorial
Improved VA hiring and retention authorities
Veterans Choice Program improvements and expansion
Declassifying toxic exposure documents
Prevented significant copayment increases for TRICARE
- 2018 Expanded caregiver benefits to veterans of all eras
Consolidated community care into one improved program
Established a process to evaluate and improve VA facilities to better serve veterans
Defeated proposed cuts to Individual Unemployability
- 2019 Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act
Elimination of the Widow's Tax
- 2020 Added bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and parkinsonism to VA's list of presumptive conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange
Changed the statutory definition of Vietnam veterans to include individuals who served in the Republic of Vietnam from Nov. 1, 1955, to Feb. 27, 1961
Deborah Sampson Act
Elimination of the 12-year limit on using Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) benefits