



# ACTION CORPS WEEKLY



May 3, 2021



### **VFW Testifies Before Senate on Toxic Exposure:**

On Wednesday, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs held a hearing on pending legislation. VFW National Legislative Service Director Patrick Murray testified on the VFW's top legislative priority of toxic exposure. Murray stressed the importance of combining the best pieces of each bill to cover as many veterans as possible. "Since we seem to expose nearly 100% of our troops to hazardous substances and environments, it is entirely unreasonable that almost 75% of them have their claims denied for exposure. It is time we establish a new framework to take care of veterans who were exposed to hazards both foreign and domestic, now and in the future," said Murray. [Watch the hearing](#), which starts at the 18:27 mark or read the [testimony](#).



**VFW Adds Comment to VA's Grant:** The VFW added a comment to the Federal Register regarding the distribution and selection of grants through VA's Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program. The grant program is a section of the VFW-supported [John Scott Hannon Act](#), which gives VA the funding for community-based grants to provide or coordinate suicide prevention services for veterans and their families. The VFW believes grants should primarily be awarded to organizations with a proven track record in advocating for comprehensive suicide prevention and mental health services for veterans. Applicants must demonstrate knowledge of military culture and service and their ability to perform gap analysis and provide services based on those outcomes. [Read the VFW's comment](#).



### **Restaurant Revitalization Fund to Prioritize**

**Veterans:** The Restaurant Revitalization Fund was created by the American Rescue Plan which was signed into law in March by President Biden. The Fund will provide \$28.6 billion in direct relief funds through the Small Business Administration (SBA), to restaurants and other food establishments financially impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. SBA will prioritize veteran applications for the first 21 days after applications open on Monday, May 3, 2021, at noon EDT. [Learn more.](#)



### **Complete the VFW's 2021 COVID-19 Health**

**Survey:** Last April the VFW tallied responses to our COVID-19 survey and used that data to advocate for veterans with Congress and VA. The VFW has developed a follow-up survey to evaluate your health care experiences, how your health care may have changed in the last six months, and your perceptions of your overall physical and mental health over the past 30 days. Your feedback is vital to our advocacy efforts and to compile a report on this important topic. Help the VFW hold VA and Congress accountable by taking this short survey regarding your experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Take the survey.](#)



**MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced two burial updates and five new identifications for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from World War II and Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Army Cpl. Clifford S. Johnson, 20**, of Valatie, New York, was a member of Headquarters Battery, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 6, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Johnson will be buried May 19, 2021, in Schuylerville, New York. [Read about Johnson.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class Wallace G. Mitchell, 19**, of Los Angeles, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the

deaths of 429 crewmen, including Mitchell. He will be buried on May 28, 2021, in San Diego. [Read about Mitchell.](#)

-- **Navy Fireman 3rd Class Harry R. Holmes, 19**, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Holmes. Interment services are pending. [Read about Holmes.](#)

-- **Navy Lt. Cmdr. Hugh R. Alexander, 43**, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Alexander. He was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for his actions in saving the lives of several fellow crew members. Interment services are pending. [Read about Alexander.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Charles L. Saunders, 18**, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Saunders. Interment services are pending. [Read about Saunders.](#)

-- **Navy Fireman 2nd Class Ralph C. Battles, 25**, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Battles. Interment services are pending. [Read about Battles.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Russell O. Ufford, 17**, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Ufford. Interment services are pending. [Read about Ufford.](#)

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