



ACTION CORPS WEEKLY



October 18, 2021



VFW Testifies Before House Subcommittee: VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director Tammy Barlet testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health regarding several pieces of pending legislation. She spoke about how Vet Centers are a vital resource for veterans, and the importance of VA's Veteran Justice Outreach program (VJO). "As the demand for veterans treatment courts increases, the program's success faces barriers and challenges due to lack of financial support, open-minded prosecutors, and reliance on judges to volunteer for the position," Barlet said on the importance of holding VA accountable for the VJO program. [Read the testimony](#) or [watch the hearing](#).



Congress Passes Maternity Care Bill: The Senate passed VFW-supported [S. 796](#), *Protecting Moms Who Served Act of 2021*. This legislation would require VA to coordinate maternity care programs with community providers to meet the unique needs of pregnant and postpartum veterans. It would also require a report on maternal mortality rates, and racial and ethnic disparities in care. The bill, which passed the House in May, now heads to the president's desk for signature.



Senate Passes Buddy Check Bill: The Senate passed VFW-supported [S. 544](#), to direct VA to designate one week each year as "Buddy Check Week." This legislation would promote outreach and education concerning wellness checks for veterans. In addition, VA would provide scripts as well as online and in-person training for veterans to facilitate successful buddy checks.



Renew Your ID Cards Before They Expire: To reduce the risk of exposure during the Covid-19 pandemic, DOD electronically extended the expiration dates of ID cards. DOD has now requested that all dependents of active-duty service members, and Reserve and National Guard service members and their dependents schedule appointments immediately as these cards **will expire on Oct. 31, 2021**. ID cards of retirees and their dependents that were extended under the above conditions are valid through Jan. 31, 2022. [Read more](#). DOD will not issue any further extensions, so [schedule your appointment](#) today! ID cards for retirees and their dependents have changed to the Next Gen USID cards which are being issued now.



Student Veterans of America (SVA) Releases Annual Census: SVA has released a demographic survey to gather data on the needs of veterans, active-duty military, and their dependents. You do not have to be currently attending school or be involved with an SVA chapter to participate. The VFW encourages as much participation as possible so we can use this data alongside SVA to best advocate for policies on education benefits for veterans. [Take the survey](#).



MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced one burial update and one new identification for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from World War II. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

- **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Alan E. Petersen, 23**, of Brownton, Minnesota, was assigned to 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Peterson was serving as a bombardier crashed as a result of enemy anti-aircraft fire. Following the war, his remains could not be identified. He will be buried on Oct. 30, 2021, in Glencoe, Minnesota. [Read about Petersen](#).
- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Pete Turk, 20**, was assigned to the battleship USS California, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS California sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the

ship resulted in the deaths of 104 crewmen, including Turk. Interment services are pending. [Read about Turk.](#)

[Click here to view this week's edition.](#)
[Click here for past editions of the VFW Action Corps Weekly.](#)

[Click here to sign up new veterans' advocates.](#)

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.