



ACTION CORPUS WEEKLY



May 2, 2022



House Hearing on Predatory Claims Practices:

VFW National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci testified before a joint hearing of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittees on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, and Oversight and Investigations, on quality representation in the VA disability claims process. He highlighted the importance of VA-accredited claim representatives, attorneys, and agents who must adhere to professional and ethical standards. Unaccredited claim consultants, or "Claim Sharks," avoid VA oversight, charge unreasonable fees, and offer inferior service. "In our opinion, any group that fails to adhere to VA's well-established standards of accreditation and fee arrangements should be met at the door by Capitol Police, not offered a seat at the same table as hard-working, VA-accredited advocates who are held to professional and ethical standards designed to protect veterans," said Gallucci. "If a company asks a veteran to sign contracts, waivers, and disclosures but will not file a power of attorney with VA, then the veteran should not work with them." [Watch the hearing](#) or [read the testimony](#).



VFW Testifies on VA Budget: VFW National Legislative Deputy Director Tammy Barlet testified before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs alongside our partners in *The Independent Budget* (IB) — DAV (Disabled American Veterans) and Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). The hearing focused on President Biden's budget for VA. "The IB's and Administration's recommendations for fiscal year 2023 are much closer than they have been in recent years, but we continue to differ on the appropriate amount for VA health care," said Barlet.

Additional hearing witnesses discussed disability compensation claims processing and infrastructure. [Watch the hearing](#) or [read the testimony](#).



VA Adds New Presumptive Conditions: VA has added nine rare respiratory cancers to the list of presumptive conditions for particulate matter exposure from service in Southwest Asia. These conditions were proposed in March and have now been added to VA's regulations through an interim final rule. The VFW sees this as a step in the right direction to help veterans exposed to toxins but remains committed to passing the comprehensive toxic exposure legislation, *Honoring our PACT Act*, to codify VA's presumptive process. [Read more](#).



Public Service Loan Forgiveness Waiver: On April 25, 2022, the Department of Education (ED) began allowing student loan borrowers seeking financial relief through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program to submit a DD-214 to certify periods of eligible employment. Many individuals with outstanding federal student loans may be eligible for PSLF, including eligibility from time served on active duty. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ED is offering a limited-time waiver to allow borrowers to receive credit for past periods of repayment on loans that would otherwise not qualify. Individuals must have been working full time for a qualifying employer. This waiver is available through October 31, 2022. [Learn more and check your eligibility](#).



MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced two burial updates 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: -- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Laverne A. Nigg, 23**, of Browns Valley, Minnesota, 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 that caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Nigg. He will be buried on June 4, 2022, in his hometown. [Read about Nigg](#).

-- **Army Air Force Lt. Col Addison Baker, 36**, of Chicago, was commander of the 328th Bombardment Squadron, 93rd bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft Baker was piloting crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. Following the war, his remains could not be identified. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. The date and location of his funeral have yet to be decided. [Read about Baker.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Tech. Sgt. William F. Teaff, 26**, was assigned to the 351st Bombardment Squadron, 100th Bombardment Group, 8th Air Force. On March 6, 1944, he was serving as a radio operator on a B-17 Flying Fortress when it was destroyed during a bombing mission. The entire crew, except for the navigator, survived and bailed out, but were captured by the Germans and sent to POW camps. Teaff died on July 10, 1944, in a nearby village while receiving medical treatment for diphtheria. Interment services are pending. [Read about Teaff.](#)

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