



# ACTION CORPUS WEEKLY



April 3, 2023



## Education and Transition Pending

**Legislation:** VFW National Legislative Director Pat Murray testified on pending legislation at a House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity hearing. In regard to the importance of proper oversight of the TAP program Murray stated, "While we know it is not the role of this committee to ensure TAP is properly administered, we urge Congress as a whole to make sure it is being done." [Watch the hearing](#) or [read the testimony](#).



**Benefits Legislation Hearing:** VFW National Legislative Deputy Director Kristina Keenan testified on pending legislation at a House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs hearing. The bills included H.R. 1139, *Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act*, known as the *GUARD VA Benefits Act*, which is one of the VFW's top legislative priorities. It would reinstate penalties for charging veterans and survivors unauthorized fees related to claims for VA benefits. "Currently, these predatory companies have no accountability, no oversight, and no penalties," said Keenan. "If they were genuine in providing veterans with more choice, they would choose accreditation and offer quality services that are transparent and legal." [Watch the hearing](#), or [read the testimony](#).



**Press Conference on Medical Cannabis Access:** VFW National Security and Foreign Affairs Associate Director Brittany Dymond spoke at a press conference held by Reps. Mast (FL-21) and Blumenauer (OR-03) urging Congress to pass the bipartisan *Veterans Equal Access Act*. This legislation would enable veterans and their VA doctors to discuss medical cannabis treatment options in states where it has been legalized. Discussion is currently prohibited by federal law, resulting in unequal medical cannabis access for VA patients and their civilian counterparts. “Thirty-seven states, three territories, and Washington, D.C., have legalized medical cannabis. That’s nearly three quarters of the country where veterans are unsure or afraid to discuss state medical cannabis options with their doctors,” said Dymond. The VFW was joined by representatives from other veteran organizations who also stressed the necessity of closing this parity gap. [Watch the press conference.](#)



**Health Bills Hearing:** The House Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on pending legislation. Representatives from VA answered questions on its policies and procedures regarding long-term health care services, increasing the number of patient advocates, and appropriate notifications for detailed positions. VFW National Legislative Associate Director Meggan Thomas submitted a statement for the record. Regarding H.R. 542, *Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023*, Thomas commented that the VFW continues to advocate for long-term care options as stated in our legislative priority goals and resolutions, which is why we support this proposal. [Watch the hearing](#), or [read the testimony](#).



**MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced four burial updates 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 Air Forces Staff Sgt. Edgar L. Mills, 25**, of Tampa, Florida, was assigned to the 816th Bomber Squadron, 483rd Bomber Group, 15th Air Force. On July 18, 1944, Mills was an armorer gunner on board a B-17G that was shot down during a bombing raid

on enemy aircraft and air defense installations around Memmingen, Germany. His body was not recovered, and the Germans never reported him as a prisoner of war. The War Department issued a finding of death on July 26, 1951. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, on a date yet to be determined. [Read about Mills.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Pvt. John W. Ropp, 31**, of Sierra Madre, California, was a member of the 2nd Observation Squadron in the Philippines when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December 1941. Intense fighting continued until the surrender of the Bataan peninsula in April 1942 and of Corregidor Island in May 1942. According to prison camp and other historical records, Ropp died on July 28, 1942, and was buried along with other deceased prisoners in the local Cabanatuan Camp Cemetery. He will be buried in Camarillo, California, on a date yet to be determined. [Read about Ropp.](#)

-- **Army Pvt. Leroy M. Slenker, 28**, of El Segundo, California, was a member of the 75th Ordnance Depot Company when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December 1941. Intense fighting continued until the surrender of the Bataan peninsula in April 1942 and of Corregidor Island in May 1942. According to prison camp and other historical records, Slenker died on Nov. 15, 1942, and was buried along with other deceased prisoners in the local Cabanatuan Camp Cemetery. He will be buried in Dixon, California, on a date yet to be determined. [Read about Slenker.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. Carmen Carrillo, 20**, of Lompoc, California, was a member of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on May 17, 1951, after fighting against the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces in Gangwon Hongchun, Republic of Korea. There was no indication his remains were recovered after the battle, and he was never recorded as a prisoner of war. The Army issued a presumptive finding of death on Dec. 31, 1953. He will be buried in his hometown on a date yet to be determined. [Read about Carrillo.](#)

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