



January 24, 2022



**VFW 2022 Priority Goals:** The 117th Congress is now in its second session. Although there were some legislative victories for veterans in 2021, there is still much work to be done. The [VFW 2022 Priority Goals](#) focus on Budget; Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs; Education, Employment, and Transition Assistance; Health Care; Military Quality of Life; and National Security, Foreign Affairs, and POW/MIA. The VFW will continue to work diligently to ensure members of Congress improve care and benefits for veterans, service members, and their families.



**House Committee Discusses Toxic Exposure:** The VFW participated in a roundtable, "The True Cost of our Promise to Toxic-Exposed Veterans," hosted by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. The discussion focused on [H.R.3967](#), the *Honoring our PACT Act of 2021*, a comprehensive plan to provide veterans with health care and benefits related to toxic exposures. VFW Legislative Director Pat Murray stated that VA's process in determining presumptive conditions related to toxic exposures should include transparency, timelines, and an independent review board. [Watch the roundtable.](#)



**EVEST Act Passes House:** The House passed VFW-supported [H.R. 4673](#), the *Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition (EVEST) Act*. This bill would require VA to automatically enroll eligible veterans into its health care system upon receipt of confirmation from DOD. If passed into law, this proposal would provide a seamless transition of health care, unless transitioning service members choose to opt out of the VA health care system. Now the VFW calls upon

the Senate to take up this important piece of legislation and pass this bill.



**COVID-19 Booster is Critical:** As we approach the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic and with rapidly increasing cases of the Omicron variant, CDC vaccine guidelines include receiving a vaccine booster. Data has shown those who are fully vaccinated and have received a booster shot are less likely to be contagious and require hospitalization. Veterans, caregivers, and spouses may receive the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine booster by checking with their [local VA facility](#) for vaccine clinic times. [Learn more.](#)



**MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has not announced any new identifications or burial updates this past week.

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