Legislative Victories

The VFW played an instrumental role in virtually every significant piece of veterans’ legislation passed in the 20th century, as well as bills enacted in the 21st century. Note: In each case, this is the year an act was passed or an institution established.

For more information, contact the VFW National Legislative Service at vfwac@vfw.org.

1917 War Risk Insurance Act Amendments
1918 Vocational Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 178)
1919 Census Act Rider on Veterans Preference Discharge Allowance
1920 Widows and Orphans Pension Act (Spanish-America War)
1921 Veterans Bureau Act
1923 Veterans Preference Point System
1924 House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs
  World War Adjusted Compensation Act
1925 Senate Subcommittee on Veterans’ Affairs
1926 Spanish-American War benefits
  New Johnson Act (WWI benefits)
1930 Veterans Administration (VA) World War Service Disability Pension Act (P.L. 522)
1931 Bacharach Amendment (P.L. 743) allows borrowing on WWI bonus certificates
1933 Wagner-Peyser Act: Veterans Employment Service
1934 Pension for widows of WWI vets
1936 VFW congressional charter signed by President Roosevelt
  Bonus bonds ($2.4 billion) to WWI vets redeemable
1938 Armistice Day (Nov. 11) legal holiday
1940 National Service Life Insurance
  Selective Service & Training Act
1943 Benefits to WWII veterans (P.L. 10)
  Disabled Veterans Rehabilitation Act
1944 GI Bill of Rights (P.L. 346)
  Veterans Preference Act
1946 Veteran Emergency Housing Act
1947 Bureau of Veterans Re-employment Rights (BVRR)
1950 Vocational Rehabilitation Act
1951 Servicemen’s Indemnity & Insurance
1952 Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (Korean War GI Bill)
1954 Veterans Compensation Act
  Nov. 11 declared as Veterans Day (P.L. 380)
1962 Veterans Benefits Act (Cold War GI Bill)
1966 Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act (P.L. 89-358) (Vietnam War GI Bill)
1970 Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs
1972 Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act
1973 Federal court agrees veterans preference applies to state jobs
1974 Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (vocational rehabilitation)
1976 Veterans Education & Employment Assistance Act
1977 Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance Act
1978 Veterans preference preserved
   Veterans & Survivors Pension Improvement Act
   Veterans Day returned to Nov. 11
1979 Vietnam Veterans Outreach Program (creates Vet Centers)
1980 VFW calls for Agent Orange study
   Veterans Rehabilitation & Education Amendments
1981 Former POW Benefits Act
   Veterans Health Care, Training & Small Business Loan Act
1982 Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS)
   Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedicated
1983 Emergency Veterans Job-Training Act
1984 Montgomery GI Bill Veterans Dioxin & Radiation Exposure Compensation Standards Act
   (P.L. 98-542): Agent Orange & Atomic Exposure
1987 New GI Bill Continuation Act
1988 Radiation-Exposed Veterans Compensation Act
   Department of Veterans Affairs Act
   Veterans Judicial Review Act
1989 VA becomes a Cabinet department Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims
1990 Agent Orange service-connection
1991 Agent Orange Act (P.L. 102-4)
   Persian Gulf War Veterans Assistance Act (P.L. 102-25)
1992 Veterans Health Care Act
1996 Veterans Health Care Eligibility Reform Act
1999 Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act
2003 Concurrent receipt for military retirees rated 50% disabled or more
2004 Full concurrent receipt for military retirees rated 100% disabled
   Traumatic Injury Insurance supplemental created
2005 Protestors banned from military funerals
   Stolen Valor Act signed into law
2006 VFW calls for VA/military health care system review after Walter Reed outpatient debacle
2008 Record VA discretionary budget approved
   GI Bill for the 21st Century signed into law
2009 Advance Appropriations for VA becomes law
2010 Family Caregiver Legislation signed into law
   Ensured all VA and DOD health care programs met minimum health care coverage standards
2011 VOW to Hire Heroes Act
   VFW stopped TRICARE premiums from increasing annually
2012 Honoring America’s Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act
   Extended USERRA protections to veterans working for TSA
2013 Reinstated military Tuition Assistance programs
   New Stolen Valor Act signed into law
   Stopped Creation of Distinguished Warfare Medal (Drone Medal)
2014 Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014
   In-State Tuition for Post-9/11 GI Bill eligible veterans
   Advance Appropriations for VA Benefits
2015 Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act
   Eliminated 1 percent COLA reduction penalty on future military retirees
   Created government match to military Thrift Savings Plan accounts
2016  Toxic Exposure Research Act to evaluate impact on descendants
       Enhanced fertility treatment and adoption services
2017  Forever GI Bill gives veterans a lifetime to use GI Bill benefits
       Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017
       VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act
       Global War on Terrorism Memorial
       Improved VA hiring and retention authorities
       Veterans Choice Program improvements and expansion
       Declassifying toxic exposure documents
       Prevented significant copayment increases for TRICARE
2018  Expanded caregiver benefits to veterans of all eras
       Consolidated community care into one improved program
       Established a process to evaluate and improve VA facilities to better serve veterans
       Defeated proposed cuts to Individual Unemployability
2019  Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act
       Elimination of the Widow’s Tax

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