



LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

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- Legislative**
- Action Corps Sign-Ups**
- Other Legislative Projects**

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Through the efforts of your Legislative team Chairman Jay Hoffman, Assistant Dutch DeGroot and Mike Peck we ended the 102nd General Assembly on April 8th on a very positive note.

Beginning in July with the Illinois Veterans Advisory Council Annual Report to the General Assembly we listed our ten priority bills. During the session we added three and opposed one.

In response to COVID we urged passage of an act to create the office of veterans accountability. This office will be separate from the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and the Director would be appointed for a 4 year term. The office would investigate all complaints from Veterans, their families and employees of IDVA, and signed into law by Governor Pritzker.

The Senate passed Senate Joint Resolution 28, designating US Highway 20 as Medal of Honor Highway. The resolution was adopted in April by the House. Medal of Honor Highway is a 12 state compact from Oregon to Massachusetts, and was signed into law by Governor Pritzker. The highway will be a constant reminder for all that freedom is not free.

On April 9, at 3 a.m., the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 1975 which included the amendment to the Disabled Veterans Homestead Exemption to include the Surviving Spouse receiving DIC (Dependents Indemnity Compensation). Included in this same bill was the elimination of the annual verification for veterans who are rated by the VA and total and permanent.

A bill that was the result of committee work at the Veterans Advisory Council changed the wording of the Veterans Cash Grant from PTSD to Mental Health Services and Emergency Assistance. This change will insure that more not for profits can apply for the cash grants and provide the needed service from mental health counseling, mental health first aid training and service dogs.

Other legislation passed

- Amendment to the military veterans assistance act to clarify the role of the superintendent and funding by the county.
- County VAC's may request an opinion from the states attorney
- Landlords may not deny rental assistance provided by the county VAC.
- Free certification for the dependents of active duty service members who are transferred to Illinois.



Michael Peck
Chairman

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Legislation for 2022-23

During the Department Convention the legislative committee will meet with the Chair of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committee, General Assembly members of the Veterans Advisory Council to review recommended legislation for 2022-23. By state law the recommendations will be published on July 1st and sent to the Governor and General Assembly.

Legislation currently under consideration -

- HB35 - Veterans Bill of rights, small business loans, access to health care, transfer of military education to meet state licensing requirements.
- HB3279 - veterans who are certified nursing assistance to be granted LPN status.
- Change date of IVAC annual report from July 1 to December 1
- Copies of County VAC Annual Report to be sent to Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commission for compilation and provided in a report to the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committee.
- HB583 Tax Credit for Veteran Care Giver
- HB163 Dependent School Enrollment and tuition waiver.

Federal Legislation

National has urged that we push for the Honor our PACT Act, HR3967 which has passed the house.

- S.437 Veterans Burn Pit Act- Co-Sponsored by U.S. Sen. Durbin
- Bill to give Guard and Reserve Retirees Title 38 Status
- S.458 Veterans Claim Transparency Act

Beginning at the Department Convention the Legislative Committee will provide to all Post and District Legislative Chairs information on pending bills and urge them to call their State Senator and Representative to Co Sponsor the bills. When the bill is assigned to Committee we will monitor it for a hearing date and urge the Legislative Chairs to submit a witness slip as a proponent of the bill. Of great importance, on the witness slips please list the city where your post is located. Legislators will be checking the list to see if their community is listed. Please remember, not all bills are referred to the Veterans Committee, we will work with staffers and urge them to keep us informed of bills affecting veterans. Remember, there are fewer elected officials and staffers who are veterans. They depend upon you to be the subject matter expert. We are a nation of 325 million with only 3 million young men and women serving in the military, they are the 1 percent, and you speak for them.

RECORD OF COMMITTEE WITNESS - ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HB 5184 Bill # **Veterans' Affairs Committee Committee** **Date time of hearing**
 BILL OR RESOLUTION NUMBER **Wednesday, April 6, 2022 11:00 AM**
 Other (Subject Matter): Unavailable

I. IDENTIFICATION

All fields are required unless noted as optional.

Name **Your Name**
 Address **Your Address**
 City **Your Town** State **IL** Zip **Your Zip Code**
 Firm/Business Or Agency **Self or Organization & TOWN Example "VFW Mount Prospect"**
 Title **Miss Mr Ms Mrs**
 Email **Your Email**
 (A confirmation email will be sent if email address is provided.)
 Phone **### - ### - ####**
 Fax (Optional)

II. REPRESENTATION

This section is to be filled if the witness is appearing on behalf of a group, organization or other entity.

Persons, groups firms represented in this appearance:

SELF this is preferred

III. POSITION

Select your position(s) on the legislative items.

Click
 Description **SCA 1** Proponent Opponent No Position On Merits

Proponent unless we ask you to Oppose a bill

IV. TESTIMONY

Select the testimony types that you will supply for the hearing. (Check all that apply)

Oral Written Statement Filed **Click** Record Of Appearance Only

Please Agree to the Terms Of Agreement

I Agree to the ILGA Terms of Agreement.

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ACTION CORPS

The VFW Action Corps is our national grassroots advocacy network comprised of more than 300,000 VFW members and patriotic supporters of veterans. This group stays up-to-date on the issues facing our veterans, our military and their families, standing ready to email, write, call and visit our nation's lawmakers to make their voices heard. The VFW Action Corps is free and open to all patriotic Americans who care about the military and veterans' communities.

Join the VFW Action Corps today and add your voice to the thousands of veterans' advocates making a difference every day, and if you're already a member of the VFW Action Corps, encourage your friends and neighbors to join the effort!

Participants receive:

The VFW Action Corps Weekly, an easy-to-read electronic newsletter that highlights the VFW's advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill.

Immediate access to a nationwide database of contact information for all elected officials, a congressional directory.

Regular VFW "Action Alerts" on how to get involved when our nation's veterans, service members and their families need their voices heard on Capitol Hill. The VFW Action Corps is what gives the VFW its strength in advocating for our nation's heroes. Working hand-in-hand with the VFW's National Legislative Service -- whose office is in eye-shot of the Capitol dome in Washington -- members of the VFW Action Corps are armed with all of the tools and information they need to help the VFW in its mission to support our nation's veterans.

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

2022 PRIORITY GOALS


Support Today's Veterans and Military

Please contact or visit your congressional representatives and stress that these are the issues we will be fighting for in the 117th Congress. These priority goals reflect the resolutions passed and supported by the men and women of the VFW and its Auxiliary. To find your congressional representatives, visit www.vfw.org/ActionCorps.

Play a Role in the Process

Be engaged and help us ensure that these priority goals are enacted. Sign up today for the VFW Action Corps Weekly and VFW Action Alerts:

- Visit vfw.org/JoinActionCorps
- Text "VFW" to 50457
- Scan the QR Code



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.