

TESTER'S VETERANS' BILLS

x *Signed into Law*

IN THE 117TH CONGRESS

Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act

This bipartisan, landmark law delivers multiple generations of toxic-exposed veterans their earned health care and benefits from VA for the first time in the nation's history. Named after Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson who died in 2020 from toxic exposure as a result of his military service, the law expands health care for Post-9/11 combat veterans, creates a framework for the establishment of future presumptions of service connection related to toxic exposure, expand VA's list of service presumptions, and improve resources to support VA's claims processing.

Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2022

This package of veterans' legislation improves access to health care at VA and in the community, including mental health care; improves care for veterans in rural areas; bolsters services for aging veterans; improves research-related matters; advances opportunities for student veterans; expands and modifies programs for homeless veterans, and more.

Strengthening and Amplifying Vaccination Efforts to Locally Immunize all Veterans and Every Spouse (SAVE LIVES) Act

This bipartisan law allows the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide COVID-19 vaccination services to all veterans, veteran spouses, caregivers, and the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) recipients at no cost to them.

Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act

This bipartisan law expands rural veterans' access to mental health care. It establishes three new Rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement (RANGE) program centers to provide community-based care and services for rural veterans diagnosed with serious mental health issues, and supports additional research on rural veterans' mental health care needs and treatment options.

Fiscal Year 2021 Major Medical Facility Authorization Act

This bipartisan law authorizes already funded major VA medical facility construction projects across the country for fiscal year 2021, including in California, Washington, New York, and Texas. It ensures VA is on track to deliver key projects that'll create jobs and expand quality care to veterans nationwide.

Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living (COLA) Adjustment Act of 2021

This bipartisan law increases the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans. It requires the federal government to provide disabled veterans with a COLA payable under title II of the Social Security Act, which sets the requirements for disability insurance benefits.

Fiscal Year 2022 Expiring Authorities Act

This bipartisan law reauthorizes authorities which, without extension, would have cut important veterans' benefits and services. These authorities expand access to mental health care by allowing eligible veterans to receive Beneficiary Travel pay reimbursement for transportation to and from their mental health care appointments at various sites, enhance veterans' access to dental care, and allow VA to continue accepting donated property.



Colonel John M. McHugh Tuition Fairness for Survivors Act

This bipartisan law expands in-state tuition eligibility for the families of veterans who die on active duty or from service-connected disabilities. It requires public colleges and universities that receive GI Bill benefits to provide in-state tuition rates for students using Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance—helping reduce the out-of-pocket education costs for surviving spouses and children.



VA Transparency & Trust Act

This bipartisan law requires VA to regularly report to Congress on its use of emergency COVID-19 relief funding—providing Committee leaders additional oversight over VA's spending.



Responsible Education Mitigating Options and Technical Assistance (REMOTE) Act

This bipartisan law ensures student veterans can access their full housing allowances while pursuing their education remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act

This bipartisan law provides the VA Office of Inspector General authority to subpoena testimony from former VA employees who have left federal service, former contractor personnel who performed work for the Department, or other relevant individuals during the course of its inspections, reviews, and investigations.



Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans Act

This bipartisan law expands veterans' access to high-quality breast cancer screening and lifesaving cancer care. It requires VA to develop a strategic plan to improve breast imaging services, create a telemammography pilot program for veterans in areas where VA does not offer in-house mammography, and expand veterans' access to clinical trials through partnerships with the National Cancer Institute.



Fiscal Year 2022 Major Medical Facility Authorization Act

This bipartisan law authorizes VA major medical facility construction projects critical to allowing VA to deliver modern healthcare and conduct cutting edge research to benefit veterans. This law authorizes projects in Mississippi, New York, Texas, California, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Missouri.



Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living (COLA) Adjustment Act of 2022

This bipartisan law increases certain VA benefits including disability compensation, clothing allowances, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses, parents, and children. The cost-of-living adjustment is determined by the annual COLA adjustment to Social Security benefits, as determined by the Social Security Administration.



VA Electronic Health Record Transparency Act

This bipartisan law increases the transparency of the VA Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) program and hold VA accountable by requiring the VA Secretary to submit periodic reports to Congress regarding the costs, performance metrics, and patient safety issues related to the EHRM.



Ensuring the Best Schools for Veterans Act

This bipartisan law streamlines VA's 85/15 Rule, a school reporting requirement that prohibits VA from paying benefits to students enrolling in education programs where more than 85 percent of the students in that program use the G.I. Bill or other funding from the Department..



A bill to authorize VA to transfer the name of property of VA designated by law to other property of VA

This bipartisan law streamlines the transfer of Congressionally-approved VA facility names. This law allows facilities across the country, including the David J. Thatcher VA Clinic in Missoula, to easily carry over facility names in the event of a relocation.



Fiscal Year 2023 VA Expiring Authorities Act

This bipartisan law, which Tester secured in a legislative package to fund the federal government, includes extensions for critical VA services and programs that veterans and their families rely on—ensuring a smooth continuation of their hard-earned benefits and support. This law also reauthorized key veterans' advisory committees, including the Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans, the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans, and the Veterans' Advisory Committee on Education.



Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness Act of 2021

This law permanently cuts red tape on capital grants provided by VA for organizations assisting veterans experiencing homelessness. It will ensure organizations have many of the necessary flexibilities to continue supporting veterans and avoid derailing their progress toward effectively ending veterans homelessness.



Rural Veterans Travel Enhancement Act of 2021

This bipartisan law establishes a pilot program to provide travel reimbursements for low-income veterans in advance of medical appointments and requires the U.S. Government Accountability Office to conduct assessments on how to best support veterans traveling long distances to access essential care.



Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Reform Act of 2021

This bipartisan law increases transparency, accountability, and improve performance of information technology systems and projects at VA.



Veterans Prostate Cancer Treatment and Research Act

This bipartisan law expands VA treatment and research of prostate cancer, which is the number one cancer diagnosed by the Veterans Health Administration.



VA Supply Chain Resiliency Act

This bipartisan law improves VA's supply chain issues, as highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Post-9/11 Veterans' Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2021

This bipartisan law strengthens VA's mental health care workforce, expands care options, and supports mental health research at the Department.



Revising and Expediting Actions for the Crisis Hotline (REACH) for Veterans Act

This bipartisan law improves the Veterans Crisis Line's staff training, management, and response to veteran callers at risk of suicide.



American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans Mental Health Act

This bipartisan law requires VA medical centers to consult with local tribes and deliver tailored outreach and culturally competent mental health care to Native veterans.



National Cemeteries Preservation and Protection Act of 2022

This bipartisan law supports tribal veterans' cemeteries by requiring VA to pay plot allowances for native veterans buried at tribal veterans cemeteries and authorize eco-friendly burial methods.