



AMVETS Legislative Priorities for the 117th Congress

- o Allow 501(c)(19) nonprofit organizations to accept tax-deductible donations
- o Fully fund the VA to provide quality healthcare to our nation's veterans
- o Create a better VA for women veterans
- o Provide funding for nontraditional mental health programs, research, and pilot programs
- o Hold oversight hearings on VA's mental health programs

501(c)(19) tax code

The Internal Revenue Code non-profit designation specifically for veterans' organizations is 501(c)(19). The key benefits are tax-exemption and the ability to accept tax-deductible donations. The current regulation requires 501(c)(19) organizations to maintain a membership of at least 90% wartime veterans to accept tax-deductible donations. AMVETS is the only one of the "Big 6" Congressionally-chartered veterans service organizations open to all non-wartime veterans. About 38% of AMVETS members are not wartime veterans, leaving the 70-year-old organization unable to accept tax-deductible donations.

VA healthcare

AMVETS supports a VA health care system that is fully funded first and then begins providing funding for outside care. Our veterans deserve to receive the highest quality of healthcare whether they choose to receive it from the VA or from an outside provider. Outside providers should be held to the same standard as the VA.

VA for women veterans

VA, Congress, and all advocates need to work together to eliminate barriers to care and services that many women veterans face. We will work to increase the number of gender-specific providers in VA facilities to enhance privacy and improve the environment of care for women veterans.

Veteran mental health

AMVETS has used data, research, and personal testimonials to form our support for nontraditional mental health programs. The VA's mental health budget has increased tremendously over the years and the veteran suicide rate has only increased or remained stagnant. We believe in programs that incorporate tai chi, yoga, and posttraumatic growth practices. We believe programs that are showing better results than the VA's mental health program should receive funding from Congress.

Oversight hearings

We are calling on Congress to hold oversight hearings examining the VA's mental health programs because we believe they are not working for most veterans. First of these hearings should be an examination of the 2018 Clay Hunt SAV Report. As the number one report created to study the effectiveness of VA's programs, we feel this report should be given more attention from Congress.