



AMVETS Top Three Legislative Priorities for 2023

As an organization representing 16.5 million veterans and their families, the entire AMVETS Family is committed to fighting to address the issues that matter most to **ALL** American Veterans.

Equitable IRS Treatment for Veterans Organizations

AMVETS is committed to passage of a bill that will allow all Congressionally-Chartered Veterans Service Organizations [501(C)(19)] to receive tax deductible donations.

Current IRS Code disadvantages VSOs that are open to a specific section of the Veterans population: non-wartime veterans. These fine Americans served honorably, voluntarily, but outdated IRS Code keeps the organizations that welcome them from being able to receive tax-deductible donations.

Under current law, donations to such an organization are only deductible if at least 90% of the organization's membership consists of war veterans. The bill expands the deduction to include organizations that do not meet the wartime service requirement and are federally chartered.

There are 2.4 million veterans who do not meet this definition. These men and women are mainly those who honorably served following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 and prior to the Persian Gulf War in 1991.

This antiquated regulation negatively impacts many of America's distinguished and historic veterans' nonprofits who are (or are at threat of) losing their ability to receive tax deductible charitable donations. For example, AMVETS lost its ability to receive tax-deductible donations in 2015. AMVETS is the only one of the "Big 6" Congressionally-chartered veterans service organizations open to all non-wartime veterans.

Legislation being reintroduced this month addresses the unintended consequences in the tax code by allowing any congressionally chartered 501 (c)(19) to be eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable donations.

Suicide Prevention in the VA and Armed Forces

Since 2019, AMVETS has led the way highlighting that mental health, more than any other issue, resulted in the unnecessary loss of lives for the veteran and military community. The lives of our servicemembers and veterans continue to be our number one priority.

Ideal legislative outcomes:

- Congressional leadership establishes a Select Committee on Suicide for Veterans and Servicemembers
- Introducing legislation that requires DoD to establish a proactive footprint to help train servicemembers on what is necessary to live lives worth living and the components that create positive outcomes in our lives.
- Congress pass legislation requiring the VA to do a longitudinal and near-term study on existing traditional mental health approaches and pharmaceuticals, their ability to create quality-of-life improvements for those that have used them, and correlations regarding death by suicide with any of these treatments and approaches.

Long Overdue Repeal of Concurrent Receipt

AMVETS members nationwide strongly call for the repeal of the federal government's concurrent receipt policy, which denies veterans receiving both military retirement pay and VA disability compensation if they were forced to retire early from military service because of injury or illness.

Veterans must be allowed to receive the benefits they earned through their military service. The current policy is all about saving money rather than doing what's right.

Current compensation rules create an offset, requiring veterans forfeit all or part of one benefit to pay for or pay back another. Congress justifies the policy as a way to prevent veterans from "double-dipping" from the federal government. But that is a disingenuous characterization.

Military retirement pay is earned for years of vested service and sacrifice. VA disability is awarded to compensate for reduced earning potential of veterans with lifetime disabilities directly caused by their service. They are two distinctly different benefits, separately earned.

The Major Richard Star Act (H. R. 1282/S. 344), which would provide total offset relief to veterans who suffered combat injuries or illnesses who were medically retired with less than 20 years of service.

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