

VFW Applauds Congress Passing Emergency Appropriations for VA

The following is a message from the VFW National Commander Al Lipphardt

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WASHINGTON — I am pleased to hear the news, along with the nearly 7 million other veterans who rely on VA benefits, to include disability compensation and even the GI Bill, that veterans can have peace of mind our benefits will be delivered on time October 1.

Today, the Senate passed the House-introduced emergency appropriations bill to cover the VA's \$3 billion-dollar budgetary shortfall. If a spending bill had not passed by the end of the week, the results would have been financially devastating to millions of veterans. It's worth noting this bill would not have passed with bipartisan support if not for veteran advocates from both within Congress and in the veteran community sending up red star clusters alerting to the danger.

When the 75 advocates from the VFW took to Capitol Hill last week, this was our top priority when meeting with legislators. When seven of the leading veterans advocacy groups joined us on Sept. 11 in front of the VFW's Torch of Freedom across from the Senate, we demanded our elected officials fix this issue. It was not a request. Congress heard our message loud and clear and worked to get it done. I applaud them for honoring America's promise to our veterans.

At a time of frequent political stalemates in Washington, we would like to see Congress work this effectively all the time in addressing veterans' priorities – not just when it's an emergency. Right now, there is enough bipartisan support to advance priorities like the [Elizabeth Dole Healthcare and Benefits Act](#) and the [Major Richard Star Act](#). Let's send a strong message in time for Veterans Day this year and get these done too. Continuing to pass legislation like these signals to the thousands of service men and women currently on active duty in harm's way, deployed to war zones throughout the Middle East and Horn of Africa, that they will be cared for when they get home.

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