

VFW Rallies Support for VA MISSION Act of 2018

The urgently needed, bipartisan legislation includes several VFW legislative priorities

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UPDATE: Last night, the House of Representatives voted to pass this important legislation, but we still need your help! [Contact your senators and urge them to swiftly pass the VA MISSION Act of 2018](#) to help ensure our nation's commitment to our veterans to provide them with the care they have earned.

WASHINGTON – House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman Phil Roe has introduced H.R. 5674, the VA MISSION Act of 2018, which is the culmination of hard work by members of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans Affairs to consolidate and improve VA community care programs, improve VA's ability to hire high-quality health care professionals, expand caregiver benefits to pre-9/11 veterans, and establish a process to evaluate and reform VA's capital infrastructure to better serve veterans.

"Passing this bipartisan and bicameral bill is critical to ensuring veterans have timely access to the care they have earned and deserve," said Keith Harman, national commander of the 1.7 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliary. "Leaving politics at the door when it comes to veterans issues is what Congress was elected to do, and we commend Chairmen Isakson and Roe and Ranking Member Tester for putting veterans first."

The urgently needed bill would provide much needed stopgap funding for the stressed Choice Program, which is scheduled to soon run out of money. The legislation also comes at a time of turmoil over the future of the VA health care system, and the role private sector doctors play in providing care to veterans.

"VFW members around the country have made it clear that the VA health care system must

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be improved, not dismantled,” said Harman. “This agreement strikes a balance between improving access to VA doctors and leveraging the capabilities of the private sector when VA is unable to meet veterans’ health care needs.”

Adding eligibility for the comprehensive caregiver program to all generations of veterans — without deteriorating the caregiver benefits that are currently available — is needed and long overdue. The VFW has also long advocated for reforming VA’s capital infrastructure to perform market assessments of veterans’ care and properly align VA’s physical footprint to ensure veterans have timely access to the high-quality care they have earned. [The VFW calls on its members and supporters to contact their members of Congress and urge them to cosponsor and swiftly pass this important legislation.](#)