



ACTION CORPS WEEKLY



October 4, 2021



VFW Virtual Fall Legislative Conference: The VFW National Legislative Committee participated virtually in the VFW Fall Legislative Conference, and were joined via video by VFW national officers to discuss the [VFW's legislative priorities](#) presented to Congress. The committee members held video and phone meetings with legislators and staffers, and took to social media to spotlight their hard work and dedication. The COVID-19 pandemic may have changed the way business is done for now, but it has not stopped the VFW from being the voice of our veterans and fighting for their benefits on Capitol Hill.



Veteran Proof of Housing History Bill Introduced: Rep. Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ) has introduced VFW-supported [H.R. 5402](#), the *VET RENT Act*, which would provide service members and veterans with a standard record of housing history. For those who have lived only in military-provided housing, this document would provide the needed tenant history to be competitive in the civilian rental market. This legislation originated from the proposal of a 2021 VFW-SVA fellow.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month: On average, 700 women veterans are diagnosed with breast cancer annually. Although rare, male veterans make up 1% of breast cancer cases. Congress introduced VFW-supported [H.R. 4794](#) / [S. 2533](#), the *Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans Act*, which would require VA to develop a breast imaging strategic plan, upgrade to 3D digital mammography, create telemammography, and streamline veterans' electronic medical records. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many people

postponed or canceled annual preventive care services, such as mammograms. As more individuals receive the COVID-19 vaccine and restrictions lift, veterans who are overdue for preventive care should schedule as soon as possible.



Congress is Leaving Veterans Behind: Congress is voting now on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2022. Amendments have been added to the NDAA for [H.R. 1115](#) / [S. 535](#), the *Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act*, and [H.R. 1282](#) / [S. 344](#), the *Major Richard Star Act*. Post-9/11 veterans deserve to be honored with a GWOT memorial on the National Mall and Purple Heart recipients deserve to receive all the benefits they earned. Now is the time to move these two important pieces of legislation forward. Contact your members of Congress TODAY and demand they pass this crucial legislation. [TAKE ACTION!](#)



2022 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship Application Process Open: Applications are now being accepted for the 2022 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship. The program, which is in its eighth year, is for VFW eligible members who attend an accredited institute of higher learning. Select student veterans will be chosen for the semester-long program that focuses on real policy issues faced by veterans, service members, and their families. The highlight of the program is participation in the VFW Legislative Conference, which in the past has included meetings at the White House and with senior officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs and members of Congress. Those selected also spend time with their VFW Department leaders on Capitol Hill pushing the VFW's legislative priorities. Alumni of the program have become more active at all levels of the VFW and have been instrumental in changing laws to improve care and benefits for veterans. [Learn more and apply for the fellowship.](#)



MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced one burial update and six new identifications for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from World War II and Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Navy Hospital Apprentice 1st Class Keefe R. Connolly, 19**, of Markesan, Wisconsin, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Connolly. He will be buried Nov. 8, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Connolly.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Richard G. Salsbury, 19**, was assigned to 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Salsbury was serving as a gunner crashed as a result of enemy anti-aircraft fire. Following the war, his remains could not be identified. Interment services are pending. [Read about Salsbury.](#)

-- **Army Pvt. Archie V. Fleeman, 19**, was assigned to Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Nov. 11, 1944, after his unit was part of the Hürtgen Forest offensive, near Hürtgen, Germany. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Fleeman.](#)

-- **Army Staff Sgt. William R. Linder, 30**, was assigned to Company E, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Nov. 16, 1944, after his unit was part of the Hürtgen Forest offensive, near Hürtgen, Germany. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Linder.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Don D. Dowler, 18**, was assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Dowler.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Laverne A. Nigg, 23**, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which

was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Nigg. Interment services are pending. [Read about Nigg.](#)

-- **Navy Fireman 1st Class James O. McDonald, 25**, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including McDonald. Interment services are pending. [Read about McDonald.](#)

[Click here to view this week's edition.](#)

[Click here for past editions of the VFW Action Corps Weekly.](#)

[Click here to sign up new veterans' advocates.](#)

As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to vfwac@vfw.org.