



April 27, 2026



White House Executive Order Advances Research, Access to Emerging Treatments: The VFW praised a new White House executive order aimed at accelerating research and access to emerging treatments for serious mental illness, calling it a potentially transformative step for veterans. The order directs federal agencies, including the VA and FDA, to streamline research, reduce barriers and expand clinical access to innovative therapies such as psychedelic-assisted treatments. VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore emphasized that veterans have long advocated for alternative treatment options beyond traditional medications. The policy signals a shift toward a more proactive, innovation-driven approach and could help address conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder and depression where current treatments often fall short. [Read the press release.](#)



VFW Speaks at Roundtable with House Leaders: VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci participated in a veterans organization roundtable hosted by House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., and House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Mark Takano, D-Calif. The focus was on the cost of war, toxic exposures and current legislation. Gallucci stressed that at a time when service members are in harm's way in the Middle East and around the world, Congress must not forget its duty to Honor the Contract. He mentioned how passing the Major Richard Star Act is critical, as more than 400 service members have been injured in the current conflict with Iran and some of them could soon be medically retired. The Star Act would ensure that their retirement benefits are not offset

by any disability compensation they may receive for their combat injuries. Leader Jeffries concluded the discussion by agreeing that Congress must Honor the Contract.



VFW Joins in Seeking Solutions to Veteran Homelessness: House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Mark Takano, D-Calif, hosted a roundtable to discuss preventing and ending veteran homelessness. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Joe Grassi joined 13 other participants representing a broad coalition of nonprofit organizations dedicated to advancing practical, real-world solutions to the issue. Grassi emphasized that stable, affordable housing enables veterans facing homelessness to address health needs, secure employment and maintain family stability. He noted that VA allowing expiration of the Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase program in July 2025, combined with failure to implement the VA Home Loan Program Reform Act (Public Law 119-31) in the interim, has resulted in a dramatic increase in VA home loan foreclosures, compounding housing instability for some veterans. He further explained that the VFW supports expanding veterans' eligibility for the Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing program and timely assignment of VA case managers, along with increasing access to mental health care for veterans experiencing homelessness and veterans at-risk of becoming homeless.



Subcommittee Hearing on VA Life Insurance and Pension Programs: The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held an oversight hearing on the several life insurance options offered by VA that are tailored to the unique needs of veterans. In her statement for the record, VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director Nancy Springer emphasized that, "Due to service-connected disabilities, many veterans are either uninsurable in the commercial market or face prohibitively high premiums. In recognition of this reality, VA provides guaranteed acceptance life insurance

options that ensure access to coverage regardless of health status.” VA assists transitioning service members with continuous coverage by allowing them to convert their active duty Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance to Veterans’ Group Life Insurance. Additionally, VA administers needs-based pension programs that provide financial support to wartime veterans and eligible survivors with limited income. Read the VFW’s [testimony for the record](#) or [watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 26:55 mark.



SCOTUS Rules in Favor of Service Members, Keeping Contractors Accountable: The VFW praised a major U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Hencely v. Fluor Corp.* that restores a path to justice for injured service members. The ruling allows U.S. Army Spc. Winston Hencely, who was permanently disabled after stopping a suicide bomber at Bagram Airfield, to pursue negligence claims against military contractor Fluor Corp. The Court rejected a sweeping “battlefield preemption” doctrine that had shielded contractors from liability, aligning with arguments made by the VFW in its amicus briefs. VFW General Counsel John Muckelbauer said the decision ensures service members can seek accountability when contractors act outside authorized military direction, preserving one of the few remaining legal remedies available. [Read the press release.](#)



Fort McClellan Information Gathering: In accordance with the Honoring our PACT Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-168), the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine are conducting an epidemiological study of veterans who served at Fort McClellan from 1979-1999. On May 4, 2026, the study committee will hold an information-gathering session. Fort McClellan veterans, family members and others may [register](#) for the session and sign up to provide public comments from 12:45-1:30 p.m. or 1:45-2:30 p.m. EDT. [Written comments](#) are due by May 15, 2026. [Read more.](#)



MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced seven identifications and one burial update for service members who have been missing and unaccounted for from World War II.

Identifications:

- [World War II Army Air Forces Cpl. Delmor W. Erwin](#)
- [World War II Army Technician 5th Grade Ingwell V. Bartleson](#)
- [World War II Army Air Forces Pfc. Lloyd W. Irvine](#)
- [World War II Army Technician 5th Grade William P. Keele](#)
- [World War II Army Pfc. Harlan W. Melinsky](#)
- [World War II Army Pfc. Albert H. Marks](#)
- [World War II Army Pvt. Duane W. Payne](#)

Update:

- [World War II Army Cpl. Richard A. Veal](#), New Mexico

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