



» POLICY & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO INJURED SERVICE MEMBERS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND CAREGIVERS

Military retirees and veterans earned financial and other benefits through their service. We have an obligation to provide these benefits promptly and in full, and budget savings should not come at the expense of commitments made to this population.

- ★ VA faces an unacceptable backlog in the appeals process, resulting in wait times that regularly top five years. Congress must give the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) the authority to fix this problem, and the VA must follow through to ensure that veterans receive prompt adjudication of appeals.
- ★ Some disabled veterans are entitled to both Department of Defense (DoD) retirement annuities and VA disability compensation. These individuals earned both sets of benefits, and any proposal to offset them against one another should be rejected.
- ★ Children and spouses of deceased veterans may, in some cases, receive both Survivor Benefit Plan payments and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation payments. Any proposal to offset these benefits against one another should be rejected.
- ★ Veterans with less than honorable discharges lose access to certain benefits, including Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits, VA home loans, and VA health care. In some of these cases, veterans are discharged due to behavior linked to post-traumatic stress disorder (PSTD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), or military sexual trauma (MST) incurred in service. Excluding veterans from benefits because of in-service injury is unfair, and policy makers should address this issue accordingly.

