



VOICES

"Since the year 2000, hundreds of thousands of veterans have suffered traumatic brain injuries, many from blasts they never saw coming that changed their lives in an instant. These wounds don't always show on the outside, but they show up around kitchen tables, in broken sleep, in strained marriages, and in moments when a veteran wonders if anyone truly understands what they're carrying."

- American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director Cole Lyle at a Jan. 9 press conference after Reps. Jack Bergman (R-Mich.) and Sarah Elfreth (D-Md.) introduced the bipartisan BEACON Act, which seeks to modernize VA's approach to TBI treatment

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102,873

Number of messages sent to Congress between Jan. 1, 2025, and Jan. 1, 2026, through the Grassroots Action Center, in support of Legion-backed legislation.

10

Bills and pending legislation for which The American Legion submitted a Statement for the Record to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Jan. 21.

369

Number of bills in the first session of the 119th Congress reviewed by American Legion policy analysts and legislative staff by Jan. 1.

\$2,120,741,923

Amount in VA disability benefits secured for veterans who received free assistance from accredited American Legion service officers and appeals representatives in December 2025 alone.

\$4,501,579

Amount in retroactive VA benefits awarded in January to veterans who received free appeals assistance from national American Legion representatives.

347

VA disability claim decision appeals ruled in favor of the veteran in January after free assistance from national American Legion representatives.

\$661,073

Amount in VA debt waivers granted to veterans and survivors in January after free American Legion representation.

250

Number of back-to-school supply kits collected and distributed to five public schools thanks to a USA 250 Challenge effort from the American Legion Family of Post 2 in Shakopee, Minn.

\$48,814

Amount in American Legion national youth scholarships awarded in January to 19 students.

570

YouTube views of the American Legion's Tango Alpha Lima podcast episode featuring Shawn VanDiver, who created a nonprofit organization that helps evacuate Afghanistan allies.

3

New fundraising tier levels announced for the USA 250 Challenge, in support of the American Legion's Veterans & Children Foundation and in celebration of the nation's semiquicentennial; participants who achieve fundraising goals of \$250, \$500 and \$2,500 will receive rewards.

27

Minimum number of special events planned or underway in The American Legion Department of Utah to celebrate the nation's 250th birthday in 2026.

VOICES



"As Legionnaires, we're often the first people veterans trust. That puts us in a position to save lives if we're willing to act."

- Manteca, Calif., American Legion Post 249 Commander Karleen Kurys, survivor of a suicide attempt, whose post conducted an American Legion Be the One training session in September; her goal is to train 100 in her community to detect and prevent veteran suicide

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50

Number of health-care workers who will take Be the One suicide prevention training, thanks to an initiative by American Legion New Jersey Post 109.

\$38,000

Amount in American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grants awarded to three youth-serving non-profit organizations in January.

\$2,500

Amount of one American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance grant awarded in January to the family of a qualified veteran, with two minor children at home, who faced an unexpected financial emergency.

85

Number of Scouting recognition certificates disbursed by American Legion National Headquarters in January, including 82 Eagles.

114

Number of registered participants in the Jan. 31 American Legion National Regional Information Conference in Indianapolis where, among the subjects, was response to the question, "How can you Be the One (to prevent one veteran suicide)?"

270

Number of American Legion Baseball teams that began the registration process in January for the 2026 season.

\$67,000

Record amount raised in 2025 for local charities, non-profits and law-enforcement agencies by American Legion Post 159 in St. Clairsville, Ohio.

22,320

Rounds of ceremonial ammunition distributed to American Legion posts and departments in January through the Military Surplus Program overseen by the National Security Division in Washington.

3,000

Approximate number of new American Legion Gaming Discord network members since ALG had an exhibit at the 106th National Convention in Tampa, Fla., last August.; the ALG Discord community now numbers over 10,000.

1,563

Number of veterans' graves properly identified at Forest Hill Cemetery after a 22-month effort led by American Legion Post 9 in Derry, N.H., nearly doubling the number of those previously known.