

Veteran Advocate Newsletter

August 2026

This Newsletter is published monthly as a Service and Reference for all Veterans, Veteran Family Members, and friends of Veterans. Each month multiple Veteran Military Organization sites (and other sources, as applicable) are queried for timely, relevant, and viable Veteran issues... issues that regardless of source, impact Veterans and their Family Members.

Nothing is provided in this newsletter that cannot be retrieved by the reader – all sources are cited. Articles and/or article excerpts below are simply provided for ease of access and/or reference. This newsletter represents no particular Veteran Service Organization.

This month, I am addressing legislation, specifically House Resolution (H.R.) 9237 – the Take Care of America’s Veterans Act. See: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/9237>

I have attached 3 Article Extracts on this H.R.

- **1st Attached Article Extract:** A July 2, 2026, American Legion piece laying out its position on this H.R.
- **2nd Attached Article Extract:** A June 11, 2026, VFW piece laying out its position on this H.R.
- **3rd Attached Article Extract:** A July 16, 2026, Newsweek article which states the resolution was “... Stalled in the House”. This article excerpt also gives some detail about the H.R.

I strongly recommend to every reader to do personal research into this matter... come up you’re your own opinion on the H.R. The point is to be informed. Be informed about important legislation effecting Veterans and Veteran Benefits.

Remember, The “Go-To” source for updates on legislation and benefits available for eligible Veterans is Certified/Professional Service Officers (VSO’S). As I always do, I have listed a couple of VSO sources below.

- Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs Phone (IDVA) Phone: (815) 633-5875
- Veterans Assistance Commission of Winnebago County (VACWC), Phone: (815) 516-2850, Email vac@wincoil.us

I have also Attached some previous information provided to you about Buddy Checks. Please see the American Legion article excerpt at the end of this newsletter regarding Buddy Checks. This piece also lists additional outside resources for Mental Health issues. Remember, World events can “trigger” Veterans battling Mental Health and/or Substance Use Issues. ***Call/check on a buddy!***

u/R David

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Article Excerpt : American Legion

Source: <https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/legislative/2026/july/58-billion-reasons-to-support-tcava>

If the Take Care of America's Veterans Act does not pass, veterans programs stand to lose up to \$58 billion, National Commander Wiley writes.

Dear American Legion Family members and friends,

The Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA) is really a \$58 billion proposition.

If the legislation, which includes more than 60 veterans-related bills, does not get approved by Congress, veterans stand to lose up to \$58 billion in programs, benefits and other matters.

Just like when we were in the military, this is a case of "Use it or lose it."

Let me explain.

The VA has proposed a rule which estimates say will result in somewhere between \$19 billion and \$58 billion being diverted from veteran benefits to the U.S. Treasury.

The American Legion has objected to this rule change. Despite our best efforts, the VA has not withdrawn this proposed rule.

That means if we don't act, billions of dollars will go from supporting veterans to funding other causes.

The American Legion is among a coalition of 23 veteran organizations that wrote to the leaders of Congress, advocating to pass TCAVA and keep those tens of billions of dollars for veterans. **(Read the letter [here](#).)**

Let me be clear. We are not trading veterans benefits.

We are using up to \$58 billion to help our brothers and sisters, rather than lose it.

That's it — use it or lose it.

And that is why The American Legion supports the Take Care of America's Veterans Act. This legislation combines more than 60 bills, most of which The American Legion supports.

It expands suicide prevention.

It improves care for traumatic brain injuries.

It offers relief for combat-injured retirees through the Major Richard Star Act.

It gives real support for the family caregivers who hold our wounded together.

If the Take Care of America's Veterans Act does not pass in its current form, none of these reforms will happen.

That is something The American Legion won't stand for.

And neither should you.

I recommend reviewing the facts about this legislation, understanding the Legion's process and encouraging your members of [Congress to support TCAVA](#). Visit [this special web page](#) for those resources and more.

Dan K. Wiley

Nation Commander

The American Legion

Article Excerpt: Veterans of Foreign Wars

Source: <https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/latest-releases/archives/2026/6/vfw-strongly-opposes-disability-benefit-cuts-included-in-proposed-take-care-of-americas-veterans-act>

VFW Strongly Opposes Disability Benefit Cuts Included in Proposed Take Care of America's Veterans Act

VFW National Commander: 'A grateful nation pays its debts to veterans; it does not send them the invoice.'

June 11, 2026

WASHINGTON – The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) stands defiant in its opposition against provisions contained within the proposed Take Care of America's Veterans Act, H.R. 9237 and S. 4744, which would offset the cost of expanding benefits for combat-injured veterans by cutting disability compensation and health care access for future generations of disabled veterans.

"The VFW strongly opposes the Take Care of America's Veterans Act as currently drafted because it asks future disabled veterans to bear the cost of expanding benefits through changing the VA rating schedule for tinnitus and obstructive sleep apnea which are common conditions associated with combat poly trauma," said VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore. "We have long maintained that veterans' benefits are an earned obligation of the nation, a promise made through the military service contract, and should not be financed through offsets, fee increases or reductions that place additional burdens on veterans, military families and survivors."

According to VA estimates, these changes could reduce disability compensation payments by approximately \$57 billion over ten years and affect up to 1.5 million veterans. The VFW vehemently rejects these provisions not only because they would unfairly penalize disabled veterans, but also because they set a dangerous precedent by allowing Congress to alter disability ratings for budgetary purposes rather than relying on medical evidence and the established principles of the VA rating schedule.

“Congress should Honor the Contract and strengthen veterans' programs without creating new costs for those who sacrifice in service to our country,” said Whitmore. “A grateful nation pays its debts to veterans; it does not send them the invoice.”

The VFW is urging Congress to remove the disability compensation offset provisions from the legislation and identify alternative funding mechanisms that do not come at the expense of disabled veterans and their families.

Veterans, service members, family members and supporters are encouraged to contact their elected officials and urge them to oppose the disability compensation offset provisions contained in the bill.

Also See: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/9237>

Article Excerpt : Newsweek

Source: <https://www.newsweek.com/va-benefits-bill-stalls-as-lawmakers-warn-of-major-cuts-for-veterans-12205070>

News Article

VA Benefits Bill Stalls as Lawmakers Warn of Major Cuts for Veterans

PUBLISHED

JUL 16, 2026 AT 02:04 PM EDT

By [Suzanne Blake](#)

Reporter

The vote on the [Take Care of America's Veterans Act](#) stalled in the House on Thursday morning, creating an uncertain path forward for a legislative package that could be the largest expansion of veterans benefits in more than a decade.

Republican leaders pulled the bill amid growing opposition from lawmakers and veterans' groups, who warned that expanding some benefits under the measure could come at the expense of future disability payments for veterans with conditions such as tinnitus and sleep apnea.

Sponsored by House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost, an Illinois Republican, the law would expand benefits for [disabled veterans](#), military survivors, caregivers and families while also making changes to [veterans' healthcare](#) and compensation programs.

"We have found a pathway to finally get these benefits and transformations done for the first time in years. It is fiscally responsible to do so," Bost said this week.

However, ahead of the vote, the legislation became one of the most contentious veterans bills to reach the House floor in recent years, splitting major veterans organizations and drawing sharp opposition from Democrats over how its new benefits would be funded.

Why It Matters

Many of the provisions included in the legislation have bipartisan support and have been stalled for years because lawmakers could not agree on how to pay for them.

While the lawmakers behind the bill created the Take Care of America's Veterans Act as way to advance dozens of long-sought veterans priorities in a single package, those against the legislation have argued that Congress should not expand some veterans benefits by reducing or limiting future benefits for other disabled veterans.

What to Know

The legislation is formally known as H.R. 9237. According to bill text, it would amend federal veterans laws to improve benefits and VA operations, with sections covering compensation, survivors benefits, claims processing, disability ratings and health care administration.

"Some have attempted to label the Take Care of America's Veterans Act as either 'pro-veteran' or 'anti-veteran,' but the reality is there's more under the surface," Alex Beene, a financial literacy instructor for the University of Tennessee at Martin, told *Newsweek* on Thursday. "If the House approves it in its current form, the long-term impact could be mixed."

Among its highest-profile provisions are:

Major Richard Star Act

The centerpiece of the package would allow roughly 50,000 combat-injured veterans to receive both military retirement pay and VA disability compensation without offsetting reductions. The proposal has attracted hundreds of bipartisan co-sponsors but has struggled for years because of its estimated multibillion-dollar cost.

"Many veterans oppose this legislation because it effectively asks one group of veterans to help pay for benefits for another by reducing future disability compensation for conditions like tinnitus and sleep apnea," Kevin Thompson, the CEO of 9i Capital Group and the host of the *9innings* podcast, told *Newsweek*.

"That's why so many veterans' organizations view it as a zero-sum proposal. The issue isn't necessarily the expansion of benefits; it's how those benefits are being funded."

Love Lives on Act

The legislation would expand benefits for military widows and widowers who remarry, which has been another long-standing veterans advocacy priority.

Additional Benefits Expansions

The package also includes caregiver support, mental health initiatives, claims-processing reforms and dozens of other veterans policy changes.

Fight Over Funding

The bill's biggest controversy centers on how Congress would pay for the new benefits because the legislation relies in part on future changes to VA disability compensation for tinnitus and sleep apnea, conditions that account for some of the largest categories of VA disability claims. It could reduce compensation for veterans receiving ratings for those conditions.

Democrats, including House Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Mark Takano of California and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, have criticized the funding for the new bill, arguing that it effectively pays for new veterans benefits by cutting others.

"The Republican insistence on offsetting new investments in veterans is both absurd and cruel," Blumenthal and Takano wrote in an op-ed for Fox News. "The cost of war includes the human cost of caring for our veterans. We make a promise to care for these men and women after their service, and a great nation keeps its promises."

Lawmakers behind the bill have pushed back, saying VA officials have already been considering changes to tinnitus and sleep apnea ratings for several years and if Congress does not pass the legislation, the anticipated savings would simply flow back to the Treasury rather than being redirected to veterans' programs.

"We're running out of time. The worst-case scenario is we do not get any action," Cole T. Lyle, national director of legislative affairs at the American Legion, told *Stars and Stripes*. "The changes to sleep apnea and tinnitus will go into effect regardless, and we will have lost the opportunity to find under the congressional budget rules a 'pay for' that is palatable and feasible."

Veterans Groups Divided

The debate has divided major veterans service organizations.

Supporters of the package include the American Legion, Wounded Warrior Project, Elizabeth Dole Foundation and more than 20 other advocacy groups. They say the legislation represents the best chance in years to pass a large number of veterans priorities at once.

However, opposition has also been strong among groups including Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and Paralyzed Veterans of America, which object to the proposed funding offsets.

"Some veterans would gain benefits they've been wanting for years, but future veterans with tinnitus or sleep apnea claims could see reduced compensation," Beene said. "Some veterans groups are not necessarily rejecting every benefit in the bill, but they are arguing one set of benefits shouldn't be paid by reducing another."

What Happens Next

The future of the Take Care of America's Veterans Act is now uncertain after House Republican leaders pulled the legislation from the floor Thursday despite defeating a Democratic effort to alter the measure.

The delay could eliminate any realistic chance of passing the legislation before the end of the summer.

"The pushback has been fierce because many veterans believe the government is changing the deal after the fact," Thompson said. "When someone volunteers to serve, there is an expectation that the benefits promised will be honored. If those promises can be rewritten years later, it raises legitimate questions about the government's long-term commitment to those who serve."

Contact Newsweek editors on this story: [Jason Lemon](#) and [Dave Siminoff](#).

The American Legion Buddy Check Program

Source: <https://www.legion.org/buddycheck/about>

In the first four years after The American Legion launched Buddy Checks as an official program, our members have reached more than **1 million veterans** and provided critical assistance.

The number of local American Legion posts conducting Buddy Check operations in those first four years **has grown from 3,683 to 4,456**.

Buddy Checks are not membership or fundraising calls; they are simple check-ins with veterans in the community to **see how they are doing and to learn how the local post can help**.

The **MyLegion.org** web platform contains contact information of American Legion members and former members.

The Department of Veterans Affairs launched its own **National Buddy Check Week** in 2023 and invites involvement from local American Legion posts.

American Legion posts are also strongly encouraged, by resolution, to make Buddy Check calls during **Veterans Week** (*mid-November*) and **American Legion Birthday Week** (*mid-March*).

Many American Legion posts have assembled **Buddy Check teams** that make calls monthly or even more frequently.

Buddy Check teams are urged to have at their fingertips a list of local resources available if needed. These may be **American Legion service officers**, **Vet Centers**, **VA healthcare facilities**, or others who can help.

Veterans may be reminded of the **Veterans Crisis Line** in case they know of someone who needs urgent assistance, or if they need it themselves.

Read about how Buddy Checks work at the local level on **LEGIONTOWN.ORG/BUDDY-CHECKS** or **SHARE YOUR OWN BUDDY CHECK STORY**

Tools For Buddy Check Teams

The American Legion's Buddy Check program

Source: <https://www.legion.org/buddycheck/tools>



Explanation of the program, steps to conduct a successful Buddy Check program, sample scripts and more are available for use by members and posts.

[The American Legion's Buddy Check program \(PDF\)](#)

How to get organized and use myLegion.org

The national membership database housed on myLegion.org provides contact information, indexed by Zip Code, that can be used to conduct Buddy Checks. Steps about how to organize team and use myLegion.org to find and contact veterans can be found here:

[How to organize a buddy check](#)

Lessons Learned

Watch a video about what a Maryland Legionnaire learned about Buddy Checks in the program's first year.

[Buddy Check Video](#)

Sample media advisory for posts

Posts are encouraged to invite local media to see how Buddy Checks are working in their communities. This downloadable template can be customized by a local post and distributed to media outlets with an invitation to cover.

[Fillable Media Alert \(PDF\)](#)

Sample Buddy Check press release for posts

The community wants to know when and why The American Legion conducts Buddy Checks for veterans in their communities. A sample press release is available that can be customized to include specifics about a local Buddy Check event or series of events.

[Fillable Press Release \(PDF\)](#)

Buddy Check door hangers

Convenient, downloadable Buddy Check door hangers are available. Posts can fill out the information on the digital file before printing, or print and then write in the information if no one is home when the Buddy Check call is made.

[Print-ready Door Hanger \(PDF\)](#)

FAQs About The American Legion

A succinct statement of basic answers to frequently asked questions about The American Legion also provides space for Buddy Check teams to modify with department and local programs and services.

[Download FAQs Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

ADDITIONAL OUTSIDE RESOURCES

- [VA Mental Health Resources](#)
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention \(AFSP\)](#)
- [Anxiety and Depression Association of America \(ADAA\)](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)
- [Mental Health America \(MHA\)](#)
- [National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#)

Buddy Checks

- [ABOUT BUDDY CHECKS](#)
- [TOOLS FOR BUDDY CHECK TEAMS](#)
- [BUDDY CHECK STORIES](#)
- [RESOURCES](#)
- [NEED HELP?](#)

Need Help?

Source: <https://www.legion.org/buddycheck/help>

If you are in immediate need of assistance, the Veterans Crisis Line provide 24/7 confidential crisis support for all veterans and their loved ones.



The graphic displays three ways to contact the Veterans Crisis Line: CALL (Dial 988 then Press 1), CHAT (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat), and TEXT (838255). It includes the Veterans Crisis Line logo with a star and the text 'DIAL 988 then PRESS 1'.

CALL Dial 988 then Press 1

CHAT VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat

TEXT 838255

Veterans Crisis Line
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

For additional support, find an American Legion service officer who can help
<https://www.legion.org/serviceofficers>

