

# 2019 POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 116<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS - 1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

**VETERANS MUST HAVE ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY, COMPREHENSIVE, AND VETERAN-CENTRIC HEALTH CARE AS WELL AS TIMELY AND ACCURATE DELIVERY OF ALL EARNED BENEFITS.**

## Strengthen and Improve the VA Health Care System and Services

- ★ **A. Oversight of the VA MISSION Act Implementation (P.L. 115-182)** – Congress must conduct vigorous oversight to ensure that the new VA community care program and the expansion of VA’s comprehensive caregiver program are completed not only within the timelines laid out by the VA MISSION Act but also within the spirit and letter of the law. Access to specialized services within VA, including the spinal cord injury/disorder (SCI/D) system of care, must remain strong.
- ★ **B. Expand Eligibility for VA’s Comprehensive Family Caregiver Program** – Congress must expand eligibility for caregiver services provided through VA’s Comprehensive Family Caregiver Program to veterans with service-connected illnesses.
- ★ **C. Improve Access to VA’s Long-Term Services and Supports** – Congress must enable VA to successfully balance its long-term services and supports systems as well as maintain a safe margin of community living center capacity – including for veterans with SCI/D.
- ★ **D. Access to IVF** – Congress must make in-vitro fertilization (IVF) a permanent part of VA’s medical care package.

## Benefits Improvements and Appeals Reform Implementation

- ★ **A. Oversight of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act (P.L. 115-55)** – Congress must provide continued oversight of VA’s implementation of appeals modernization to ensure that veterans’ claims are properly adjudicated.
- ★ **B. Benefits Improvements for Catastrophically Disabled Veterans** – Congress must improve benefits for veterans with the most severe disabilities by:
  - Increasing the Automobile Allowance Grant and ensuring that veterans receive appropriate Automotive Adaptive Equipment reimbursement; and
  - Prioritizing claims for Specially Adapted Housing for veterans with ALS and increasing the amount and usability of the grant for all catastrophically disabled veterans.

**VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES MUST HAVE EQUITY IN ACCESS TO THE OPPORTUNITIES AND FREEDOMS AVAILABLE TO ALL AMERICANS TO ALLOW THEM TO LIVE, WORK, TRAVEL, AND FULLY PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY.**

## Strengthen and Protect the Systems and Civil Rights that Support People with Disabilities

- ★ **A. Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) Improvements** – Congress must improve access to air travel for people with disabilities by strengthening ACAA enforcement through referral of certain complaints to the U.S. Attorney General and a private right of action, and requiring airlines to ensure that airplanes meet broad accessibility standards.
- ★ **B. Protect the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** – Congress must continue to protect the rights of people with disabilities to seek immediate redress of discriminatory barriers in public accommodations under the ADA and increase the tax incentives available to assist businesses with ADA compliance.
- ★ **C. Preserve and Strengthen Financial and Health Security for People with Disabilities** – Congress must strengthen the Social Security and Medicare programs and reject efforts to undermine them. These programs are earned benefits that represent an economic safety net for millions of Americans. Access to Medicaid, including long-term services and supports, must also be protected.
- ★ **D. Disaster Response and Recovery that Meets the Needs of People with Disabilities** – Congress must address current gaps in the ability of the emergency response and recovery system to address the needs of people with disabilities.