

VFW National Commander Discusses Veterans' Issues with President

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WASHINGTON — The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. met with President Barack Obama in the Oval Office this morning to discuss issues important to America's veterans, service members and their families.

Glen M. Gardner Jr., a Vietnam veteran from Round Rock, Texas, thanked the president for his strong support of the troops and their families, and for his continued support of one of the VFW's top legislative issues: advanced healthcare appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"The president is well aware that VA has only received three on-time budgets over the past 20 years," said Gardner. "I wanted to personally thank him for his support of this much needed legislation, and for his outstanding VA budget recommendation for the upcoming fiscal year. The funding increases will help transform the VA into a more user-friendly and responsive provider of world-class healthcare to more veterans in more areas."

Also addressed was VFW support of recent caregiver legislation that would formally train, compensate, and provide VA health services to family members who, through necessity, are forced to leave outside employment to care for their traumatically injured loved ones.

"Taking care of those who can't care for themselves is a fulltime job, and no one can perform it better than a family member. The government needs to care for the caregivers, too," said Gardner.

The president shared the VFW's national commander's concern for veterans and for the troops and their families, and he was also interested in Gardner's recent trip to visit U.S. troops stationed in Kosovo and Iraq.

"It was good meeting with the president and I am grateful for the opportunity," said Gardner. "I sense he truly believes that a nation that creates veterans has a sacred obligation to care for them — and their families, too. The VFW looks forward to working with him and his administration to ensure our goals become reality."

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