VFW Will Defeat Bachmann Plan

'No way, no how, will we let this proposal get any traction in Congress'

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WASHINGTON — America's oldest and largest major combat veterans' organization announced it will do everything within its power to defeat a plan introduced by Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) to cut $4.5 billion from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"No way, no how, will we let this proposal get any traction in Congress," said Richard L. Eubank, the national commander of the 2.1 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries.

On her website, the three-term congresswoman lists more than $400 billion in suggestions to cut federal spending. The VA suggestion would cap increases to VA healthcare spending, and reduce disability compensation to account for Social Security Disability Insurance payments — in other words, an offset. She says her plan is intended to generate discussion.

"The only discussion the VFW wants is to tell the congresswoman that her plan is totally out of step with America's commitment to our veterans," said Eubank, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Eugene, Ore.

"There are certain things you do not do when our nation is at war, and at the top of that list is not caring for our wounded and disabled servicemen and women when they return home," he said. "I want the congresswoman to join us in a tour of the Minneapolis VA Medical Center and Poly Trauma Center the next time she's in her home district to witness firsthand the great work the VA does every day to heal their wounds and ease their pain. Then I want her to look those disabled veterans in the eye and tell them their service and sacrifice is too expensive for the nation to bear.

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"The day this nation can't afford to take care of her veterans is the day this nation should quit creating them," said Eubank.