



VFW Demands Passage of Veterans Access and Accountability Act

Jul 22, 2014

ST. LOUIS — The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is demanding that Congress immediately pass a compromise bill to help fix the Department of Veterans Affairs before they adjourn for five weeks at the end of the month.

"Pass a bill or don't come back from recess," said VFW National Commander William A. Thien, of Georgetown, Ind. "America's veterans are tired of waiting — on secret waiting lists at the VA and on their elected officials to do their jobs."

On Monday, delegates attending the VFW's 115th National Convention here unanimously passed resolution 632 that calls on Congress to immediately pass a compromise bill that would provide necessary resources, reduce appointment waiting times, and provide veterans timely access to quality VA health care they have earned and deserve. The House of Representatives and Senate passed different versions of the VA Access and Accountability Act last month, but a conference committee formed to negotiate the two bills into one has stalled because of a debate over the bill's final cost.

"Meanwhile, veterans continue to wait, the system remains broken, and very few employees who are responsible for this nationwide crisis in care and confidence have been held accountable," said Thien, who is now demanding that Congress pass a compromise bill before they recess for the summer.

"The VA must identify and fix what's broken, must hold employees appropriately accountable to the maximum extent of the law, and must do everything possible to restore the faith of veterans in their VA, but Congress is blocking the way by their failure to reach a compromise," he said. "If Congress goes on recess without passing this legislation, the VFW will work hard with all veterans and the American public to hold every member of Congress fully accountable for failing America's veterans."

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