

# Be Proud of Your VFW on Veterans Day

## The following is a message from VFW National Commander Tim Borland

Nov 10, 2022

**WASHINGTON** – On this Veterans Day, I want all veterans to know that “Every Veteran Counts.” That phrase is my guiding slogan during my year as VFW’s Commander-in-Chief, and that message is never more relevant on a day set aside for all Americans to reflect and be thankful for those who have worn the nation’s uniform.

The VFW exists, in essence, to make the phrase “Every Veteran Counts” a practical benefit for its members and, in the process, for all of America’s veterans. A vivid, recent example is our championing of the recently enacted PACT Act. Led by VFW’s Washington Office staff, we worked with legislators on the details of the bill, encouraged our members to contact their lawmakers, hosted media events and promoted the law’s passage through VFW magazine and our other communications tools.

The law is, quite simply, the most important legislation ever passed for veterans suffering from toxic exposure. It stands to help some 3.5 million veterans exposed to toxic substances, as well as their families. It covers three generations of veterans: those from the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and those who served after Sept. 11, 2001, in Afghanistan and Iraq.

For more than 10 years, we have been fighting to get benefits and compensation for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans exposed to toxic burn pit fumes. For close to 30 years, we’ve advocated in Congress to help Gulf War veterans dealing with mysterious illnesses from their service. For Vietnam War veterans exposed to Agent Orange, the battle has gone on for nearly 50 years.

Because Every Veteran Counts, I encourage all who think they were exposed to toxic substances to register with VA’s Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry (<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/registry.asp>).

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It does not matter where or when you served, your gender or your race. If you've worn the nation's uniform, the VFW offers you a chance to join a compassionate team that respects your service and exists to serve you. VFW also needs your help to assist your fellow brothers- and sisters-in-arms.

I know that when I stand before the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, D.C., on Veterans Day tomorrow, I will think of all the hard work compiled by VFW members on behalf of their brothers and sisters, and I will be proud.

As I place a wreath on the Tomb, I'll be proud of our great organization's accomplishment in helping to get real assistance to the veterans who need it now. I am proud to be a member and the leader of the nation's greatest veterans organization.

Passage of the PACT Act demonstrates in the best possible way who we are and what we do. I believe this new law is a perfect way to celebrate Veterans Day. Tell the world about it, and remember, Every Veteran Counts.

*Commentary originally published in VFW Magazine, [November/December 2022 issue](#).*