

# The Washington Post Editorial Board Wants Veterans to Forfeit Earned Benefits

**VFW Executive Director Ryan Gallucci: ‘If the editorial board is so worried about moral responsibility, maybe they should pick up a weapon and stand a post’**

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**WASHINGTON** — Yesterday, The Washington Post Editorial Board suggested America [balance its budget on the backs of veterans](#). The VFW has heard these tired arguments before but was shocked to see them endorsed by an institution like the Washington Post.

According to their public bios, none of the 10 members of The Washington Post Editorial Board have spent a single minute serving this country in uniform unlike those who have earned the benefits the Board quickly dismisses as charity and essentially a waste of public money. The impudence with which these individuals enthusiastically signed their names to criticize the care and benefits our service members earn, while enjoying the very freedoms our service members defend, should bring shame upon them as both journalists for a once-revered institution like The Washington Post and as fellow Americans.

This lazy opinion piece from The Washington Post Editorial Board is a recycled compilation of anti-veteran talking points against which the VFW has fought for years. The VFW would have welcomed the opportunity to refute these unjustifiable points if approached to do so. Yet, those of us who represent millions of veterans are now forced to react to hatchet journalism. Had the elitist Editorial Board chosen to reach out to anyone who assists veterans in navigating these hard-earned benefits, they may have learned about the true hidden costs of more than 20 years of war, and why our nation’s commitment to care for both the visible and invisible wounds of war is crucial to our long-term national interest.

If The Post’s esteemed Editorial Board wants to take a shot at veteran benefits, they should

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at least provide original thoughts and ideas, and not the scraps of other writers or proposals that the VFW dismantles on a regular basis. Veterans' benefits cost more than they did in years past. That is the price of war. It is also the price of peace and the price of defending misguided free speech – such a paradox for those of us who swore to defend the very Constitution that protects such vitriol.

However, this cost is not only a reflection of more Americans surviving the battlefield, but it is also our country recognizing the inherent danger of military service. Last year, the Honoring Our PACT Act rightfully expanded toxic exposure benefits to veterans who have suffered debilitating illnesses, some dating all the way back to the 1950s. Does The Washington Post Editorial Board prefer these veterans, their families and survivors continue to suffer in silence as they have for years? Should those who defend the very institution and profession that printed these words continue to suffer and die because it might be too expensive?

It is laughable that the employees of one of the richest individuals in the world have the audacity to suggest disabled veterans should be the persons responsible for balancing the federal budget – instead of their wealthy billionaire benefactors who notoriously skirt their tax liabilities.

You would think with all the collective Ivy League degrees held by The Washington Post Editorial Board they would understand basic economics. Instead, they recommend that veterans be subjected to means tests or outright forfeit their earned benefits if they manage to constructively cope with these life-altering disabilities.

Sadly, it seems those degrees only served to inspire the Editorial Board to take the easy way out and renege on promises made to veterans, their family members and survivors. If the Editorial Board is so worried about moral responsibility, maybe they should pick up a weapon and stand a post.

*Ryan Gallucci is the executive director of the VFW Washington Office where he is responsible for the organization's legislative advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill and the VFW's global network of benefits representatives who are accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to assist veterans, eligible family members, and survivors in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of benefit claims before the agency.*