

VFW Supports Sanders Bill

Jan 23, 2014

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has thrown its support behind a bill introduced by the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee chairman because it fulfills a number of VFW legislative priorities that benefit all generations of veterans and their families, and it eliminates the cost-of-living adjustment penalty on military retirees.

S. 1950, the “Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Restoration Act of 2014,” was introduced last week by Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), and VFW National Commander William A. Thien is calling it “The most comprehensive veterans’ legislation to be introduced in decades.”

In a letter of support, Thien said the bill expands the current caregiver law to include all generations of veterans, something the VFW has been advocating since the law was signed in 2010. It provides advance appropriations for all mandatory accounts, which ensures disabled veterans, survivors and GI Bill student-veterans will continue to receive their monthly payments regardless of future government shutdowns. S. 1950 improves and expands education and training programs to allow veterans to receive in-state tuition rates, extends the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, improves mental healthcare access to veterans and families, expands military sexual trauma treatment services, authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to proceed with contracts to build community-based outpatient clinics that have been on hold, and mandates that VA provide a comprehensive assessment of its capital infrastructure and how it will address its deficiencies. The bill also eliminates the 1 percent COLA penalty on working age military retirees younger than age 62.

The VFW national commander is now pledging to work with Senator Sanders to get other senators and congressmen from both sides of the aisle to support S. 1950. “Now is the time for every member of Congress to support those who have served and sacrificed the most for our nation,” he said.

To urge your members of Congress to support S. 1950, and to read the VFW’s letter of support to Senator Sanders, go to [http://www.vfw.org/News-and-Events/Articles/2014-Articles/VFW-Legislative-Alert--Urge-Passage-of-Comprehensive-Veterans--and-Health-Benefits-Package-Today!/.](http://www.vfw.org/News-and-Events/Articles/2014-Articles/VFW-Legislative-Alert--Urge-Passage-of-Comprehensive-Veterans--and-Health-Benefits-Package-Today!/)

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