

Federal Allies Institute Applauds House Passage of VA Common Sense Bills

Washington, D.C. (September 26, 2016) Today the House passed three veterans-related bills, including:

H.R. 5392, the No Veterans Crisis Line Call Should Go Unanswered Act, was developed in response to inspector general and media reports that VA crisis line calls were going to voice mail because of mismanagement and lazy employees. It would require VA to develop a plan to ensure that each telephone call and text message is answered in a timely manner by an appropriately qualified live person.

H.R. 3216, the VET Act, was developed after VA refused to help a veteran suffering from a broken foot into a VA emergency room. Instead, VA hospital officials told the veteran to call 911. The bill would clarify and strengthen the VA's obligation to provide appropriate emergency care for veterans and prohibit VA from transferring a medically unstable veteran unless the veteran makes a written request to be transferred or it is clinically necessary.

H.R. 5162, the Vet Connect Act of 2016, as amended, would require VA to share medical record information with community providers in order to provide care or treatment to a shared patient.

These bills now await consideration by the Senate. Following House passage of the bills, Chairman Miller released the below statement.

"It's incredibly disappointing that VA is so broken Congress has to pass legislation just to get the department to perform common sense tasks like answering the phone and providing emergency medical treatment to veterans who need it. Nevertheless, we will keep working until the department is reformed into an organization truly worthy of the veterans it is charged with serving. These bills would help ensure all veterans have access to the help they need in times of crisis, and I'm proud to stand with my House colleagues in support of them. Now it's time for the Senate to act on this legislation as well as the more than 30 other House-passed veterans bills the Senate has yet to consider." - **Rep. Jeff Miller, Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs**

The Federal Allies Institute Government Relations Committee is following these bills. For more information, contact GovRels@FederalAllies.org.

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