

Legislative Update

January 2024

Well, we made it. 2024 is here whether, we are ready or not.

There are 3 priority bills that are still being supported. You can continue to submit your support.

Pay Our Troops Act (H.R. 5641), which currently has 112 bipartisan cosponsors. The current continuing resolution expires November 17.

Additionally, we are giving our support to the ***Keep Our Border Agents Paid Act (S. 2999)***, which would ensure that U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement are paid in the event of a government shutdown.

Finally, Congress is running out of time to pass the ***Afghan Adjustment Act (H.R. 4627 / S. 2327)***. So please take the time to contact your representative and encourage them to support the *Afghan Adjustment Act*.

The house recently passed 3 bills supported by the Legion.

- **The Cope ACT** supports family care givers by the VA through training and counseling.
- **The Elizabeth Dole Home Care-** supports home healthcare for Veterans. increasing the number of affordable alternatives to VA nursing home care
- **The Home Act-** more funding to protect homeless Veterans. AKA *the Housing Our Military Veterans Effectively Act*, increases the maximum rate of per diem payments homeless veterans may receive.

The House and Senate Armed Services Committees announced that the conference for the fiscal year 2024 (FY2024) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) was completed. The 3,000 plus page document, details the appropriations for the Department of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, guides research and development within the Department of Defense, and determines personnel benefits and recruitment strategy.

A couple of things positive that came out of this was:

- 5.2% pay raise for service members which is the largest in 20 years! (Can you imagine, not having a decent raise in 20 years and I am not even sure this is decent, since some of our service members struggle with basic needs.)

- Improving living conditions on base (some of these barracks have not been updated in years) This also will also increase access to Base Housing Allowance.

As always, for more information check the American Legion Website and get in the know in 2024.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out!

Kathy Amery

Department Legislative Chair 2023-2024

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