



August 2026 Newsletter



All American Post

VFW POST 3349

3201 REID ST., PALATKA, FL 32177

Phone: 386-328-2863

VFW3349.org



VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.



VFW POST 3349
P.O. BOX 218, PALATKA, FL 32178
PHONE: 386-328-2863



FROM THE POST COMMANDER
Gerald Donnelly
July 2026



Greetings Comrades:

FROM THE COMMANDER FOR August—I would like to thank Sunshine Cleaning Service for the outstanding job cleaning the roof and windows. They also cleaned the roof on Auxiliary building. They did this for free gratis in support of our veterans because of the 250th American anniversary on the 4th of July.

The post received a congratulation from the VFW Department of Florida State Commander Randy Cash for making All American. This is 6 years in row that the post has made All American. Great job by the members on doing the programs over the past years.

I would like to thank everyone who brought food for The 4th of July open house. It was a nice turn out by the members.

I would like to thank the people for the Friday meals In July. They work hard at making the meals on Friday and we would like to see more people come out for the meals on Friday.

On page 4-7 the editor has included a snap shot of the **The Take Care of America's Veterans Act now pending before Congress. Please read the whole article.**

Sincerely,

Commander Gerald Donnelly





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FROM THE AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Marian Chialastri

Valerie, Lucie, Lisa and I will be attending The School of Instruction on August 14th and 15th and will report at the September Meeting.

August 12th—Monthly Meeting 7PM

August 19th—Auxiliary Lunch, Noon at Velchoffs.

August 22nd—District Meeting in Interlachen. Breakfast at 9:00AM, Meeting at 10:00AM, all are welcome to attend.

Yard Sale will be held September 18th and 19th, 8am till Noon both days. You can bring your donations to the Post now until September 16th when we will be setting up and pricing.

Cancer Bingo will be October 3rd, 2026. Please save the date and come join us for some fun and help raise money for cancer,

All monies raised stays in Putnam County. Doors open 11:30, ticket sales and food will be sold at Noon. Bingo from 1-5PM.

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Respectfully submitted,

Marian Chialastri

Auxiliary President



The Take Care of America's Veterans Act is a comprehensive legislative package aimed at expanding benefits, healthcare, and support services for veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

Overview

The Take Care of America's Veterans Act was introduced in the U.S. House on June 10, 2026 by Representative Mike Bost with 30 cosponsors and referred to the House Committees on Veterans' Affairs and Armed Services for consideration.

The bill is designed to amend titles 10 and 38 of the U.S. Code and other federal laws to improve veterans' benefits and the administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). It is considered one of the most significant expansions of veteran's services in over a decade, encompassing more than 60 provisions affecting compensation, healthcare, education, transition assistance, caregiver support, and survivor benefits.

Key Provisions

- Compensation and Survivor Benefits
- Major Richard Star Act: Allows medically retired, combat-injured veterans to receive both military retirement pay and VA disability compensation, ending the "wounded warrior tax" affecting over 59,000 veterans.
- Love Lives On Act: Eliminates the remarriage penalty for surviving spouses of veterans, allowing them to retain benefits.
- Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act: Increases compensation for veterans with severe service-connected disabilities and for surviving spouses. Extends dependency and indemnity compensation to surviving spouses of veterans who die from ALS.

Education and Economic Opportunity

- Expands educational assistance, including higher housing stipends for apprenticeships and distance learning programs.
- Enhances Transition Assistance Program (TAP) counseling to ensure veterans are informed about available benefits.
- Covers licensing and certification test costs for veterans. Healthcare and Mental Health

Healthcare and Mental Health

- Expands family caregiver support and reemployment programs.
- Extends the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program.
- Improves access to adaptive prosthetics, mental health services, and telehealth.
- Establishes initiatives for research on veterans' health, including menopause, toxic exposure, and spinal trauma.
- Codifies eligibility standards for the Veterans Community Care Program (VCCP) and improves appointment scheduling.

Administration and Infrastructure

- Authorizes modernization and replacement of VA medical facilities, including a major project in New Hampshire.
- Establishes an Under Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer to improve VA operations.
- Implements reforms for VA acquisition, emergency response, and communication systems.

Memorial Affairs

- Expands eligibility for VA memorial headstones or markers for veterans, spouses, and dependents.

Legislative Status

The bill was reported by the House Rules Committee on July 13, 2026, and considered under a closed rule for debate.

On July 16, 2026, the House debated H.R. 9237, and a motion to recommit failed narrowly (210-211).

The bill remains under consideration, with further floor action postponed.

The Administration supports the bill's objectives, emphasizing improved access to healthcare, modernization of VA infrastructure, and support for veterans and their families, while noting concerns regarding certain provisions related to the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Support and Opposition

Supporters: Over 20 veteran service organizations (VSOs) and stakeholders endorse the bill, highlighting its net expansion of benefits and protections for current beneficiaries.

Opponents: Some veterans groups express concern that funding mechanisms, particularly updates to the VA Schedule of Rating Disabilities (VASRD) for future beneficiaries, could reduce benefits for up to 1.5 million veterans in the long term.

The bill includes offsets from future disability ratings for sleep apnea and tinnitus, projected to reduce future spending by \$38 billion over 10 years, with half of the savings redirected to veterans' benefits.

Conclusion

The Take Care of America's Veterans Act represents a major bipartisan effort to enhance veterans' benefits, healthcare, education, and support services. While it enjoys broad support from VSOs and the Administration, debate continues over funding mechanisms and potential impacts on future beneficiaries. If enacted, it would provide substantial improvements in compensation, healthcare access, caregiver support, and survivor benefits, marking a significant legislative milestone for the veteran community.

VFW Stance

VFW Strongly Opposes Disability Benefit Cuts Included in Proposed Take Care of America H.R. 9237 and S. 4744, Veterans Act. VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore: "A grateful nation pays its debts to veterans; it does not send them the invoice".

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) stands defiant in its opposition against provisions contained within the proposed Take Care of America's Veterans Act, H.R. 9237 and S. 4744, which would offset the cost of expanding benefits for combat-injured veterans by cutting disability compensation and health care access for future generations of disabled veterans.

"The VFW strongly opposes the Take Care of America Veterans Act as currently drafted because it asks future disabled veterans to bear the cost of expanding benefits through changing the VA rating schedule for tinnitus and obstructive sleep apnea which are common conditions associated with combat poly trauma," said VFW National Commander Carol Whitmore. "We have long maintained that veterans benefits are an earned obligation of the nation, a promise made through the military service contract, and should not be financed through offsets, fee increases or reductions that place additional burdens on veterans, military families and survivors."

‘According to VA estimates, these changes could reduce disability compensation payments by approximately \$57 billion over ten years and affect up to 1.5 million veterans. The VFW vehemently rejects these provisions not only because they would unfairly penalize disabled veterans, but also because they set a dangerous precedent by allowing Congress to alter disability ratings for budgetary purposes rather than relying on medical evidence and the established principles of the VA rating schedule.

“Congress should Honor the Contract and strengthen veterans programs without creating new costs for those who sacrifice in service to our country,” said Whitmore. “A grateful nation pays its debts to veterans; it does not send them the invoice.” The VFW is urging Congress to remove the disability compensation offset provisions from the legislation and identify alternative funding mechanisms that do not come at the expense of disabled veterans and their families.’

Veterans, service members, family members and supporters are encouraged to contact their elected officials and urge them to oppose the disability compensation offset provisions contained in the bill.

VFW Palatka Post 3349 Calendar. We are located at 3201 Reid St.
(Web Site: VFW3349.org) Phone 386-328-2863

August 2026

Canteen Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday - 3:00 to 9:00 PM Thursday, Friday - 12:00 to 9:00 PM Sat - noon to 5:00 PM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	27 <i>5:30PM Bowling</i>	28 <i>6PM BINGO</i>	29 <i>7PM Queen of Hearts</i>	30 <i>7 PM Darts / Bowling</i>	<i>Pulled Pork 6PM</i>	1st
2	3 <i>5:30PM Bowling</i>	4 <i>6PM BINGO</i>	5 <i>7PM Queen of Hearts</i>	6 <i>6 PM House Comm Darts 7PM Bowling</i>	7 <i>Tacos 6PM</i>	8 <i>1 PM In House Bowling</i>
9	10 <i>5:30PM Bowling</i>	11 <i>6PM BINGO</i>	12 <i>6:50 Queen of Hearts 7PM Post Mtg</i>	13 <i>7 PM Darts / Bowling</i>	14 <i>Pork Chops 6PM 9AM VFW Benefit Advi- sor SOI FL</i>	15 <i>8:30 VFW SOI FL HOTEL</i>
16	17 <i>5:30PM Bowling</i>	18 <i>6PM BINGO</i>	19 <i>7PM Queen of Hearts</i>	20 <i>7 PM Darts / Bowling</i>	21 <i>6PM TBD</i>	22 <i>10AM Dist 14 Meeting Inter- lachen. 1PM In House Bowling</i>
23	24 <i>5:30PM Bowling</i>	25 <i>6PM BINGO</i>	26 <i>7PM Queen of Hearts</i>	27 <i>7 PM Darts / Bowling</i>	28 <i>6PM TBD</i>	29
30	31 <i>5:30PM Bowling</i>					

POST OFFICERS

Commander	Gerald Donnelly
Sr Vice Commander	Tammy Spaulding
Jr Vice Commander	Jack Gibbs
Judge Advocate	Weldon Taylor
Adjutant	Gerald Shuler
Quartermaster	Gerald Shuler
Chaplin	Kevin Donnelly
Surgeon	Vacant
Service Officer	Bruce Howe
Trustees 1 yr	Weldon Taylor
2 yr	Valerie Johns
3 yr	William Thompson
Membership Chairman	Commander
Employment Officer	Weldon Taylor
Legislative Officer	John Dillingham
Disaster Preparedness/Relief	Bill Thompson
Historian	John Dillingham
House Committee Chairman	Gene Nieman
National Home for Children	Quartermaster
Communications/Media Relations	Commander

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Chairman	Gerald Donnelly
Members	Commander and ALL Members

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA RELATIONS

Chairman	Commander
Members	Adjutant and Quartermaster

HOUSE COMMITTEE

Chairman	Gene Nieman
Members	Gerald Donnelly Kevin Donnelly Gerald Shuler Jack Gibbs
Canteen Manager	Vickie Dixon

AUXILIARY OFFICERS

President	Marian Chialastri
Sr. Vice	Joyce Donnelly
Jr. Vice	Malinda Taylor
Treasurer	Lucie Barnette
Secretary	Jan Stephens
Chaplain	Kathie Thompson
Conductress	Valerie French
Guard	Betty Burnham
1Yr. Trustee	Valerie French
2Yr. Trustee	Robert Stephens
3Yr. Trustee	Vacant
Patriotic Inst.	Kathie Thompson

DISTRICT 14 MEETING SCHEDULE

Qtr	Date	Post	Location	Time
1 st	Aug 22	10164	Interlachen	10:00 am

Useful Web Sites

Get copy of DD Form 214 or other discharge documents: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>

Request Lost and Replacement Medals:
<http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/awards-and-decorations.html>

VFW National Headquarters Web Site:
www.vfw.org

VFW Magazine:
<https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/vfw-magazine>

VFW Store Online:
www.vfwstore.org

VFW Department of Florida Web Site:
<https://vfwfl.org>

National Do Not Call Registry
www.donotcall.gov

VFW Post Website
<http://vfw3349.org>

From the Publisher:

Please forward any news, pictures, or article submissions to:

MediaVFW3349@gmail.com

by the 20th of each month.

Thank you

Newsletter Editors — Bill and Kathie Thompson