

CONCERNED VETERANS FOR AMERICA

2019 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA ★



GUARANTEEING OUR VETERANS GET THE CARE AND BENEFITS THEY HAVE EARNED AND DESERVE

- **ENSURE PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VA MISSION ACT.** The VA MISSION Act's new Veteran Community Care Program is set to be rolled out on June 6th, 2019. **It is essential Congress ensures the VA meet the law's deadlines to establish access and quality standards for this new program** to make sure the law is able to serve qualifying veterans on June 6th. Relatedly, the 116th Congress should **oppose any efforts to restrict or limit the ability of veterans to utilize the new community program**, which would undermine the original intent of the VA MISSION Act.
- **PRESERVE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VA EMPLOYEES.** The bipartisan VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act, which became law in 2017, made it easier to discipline and fire VA employees found guilty of misconduct. **Congress should ensure this law is properly implemented and resist efforts to repeal or weaken its core provisions.**
- **IMPLEMENT COMMONSENSE COST CONTROLS FOR THE VA BUDGET.** The VA's budget has more than quadrupled over the last 17 years and has far outpaced the growth in beneficiaries. **Congress should ensure the VA is wisely managing taxpayer dollars and controlling the growth of costs** to ensure veterans get care and benefits expediently and responsibly. Potential reforms include: making the VA the secondary payer for non-service-connected community care, aligning patient copays with those of TRICARE, and eliminating unused and excess infrastructure.

PROVIDING FOR A STRONG NATIONAL DEFENSE

- **AUTHORIZE ANOTHER ROUND OF BRAC.** The Department of Defense (DoD) has not held a round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) since 2005. According to DoD estimates, the military has an 18 percent excess basing capacity, and eliminating it could save up to \$2 billion dollars annually. **Congress should authorize another round of BRAC in the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act.**
- **PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY ON ALLIED BURDEN SHARING.** Understanding our allies' contributions to shared defense efforts is critical to making better foreign policy decisions. **Congress should reinstitute the requirement to post the annual report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense** – which was ended in 2003.
- **RE-EXAMINE THE 2001 AUMF.** Congress passed the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. However, the legislation is still being used 17 years later to justify armed intervention in places with no connection to the 9/11 attacks. **Congress needs to reassert its role in overseeing America's foreign policy; and a good first step would be to re-examine the 2001 AUMF** with regard to the wars currently being fought under its auspices.

SECURING AMERICA'S FINANCIAL FUTURE

- **RESTRAIN FEDERAL SPENDING.** For too long, both political parties have ignored the looming financial crisis stemming from out-of-control entitlement spending and the inability even to stick to the modest limits on discretionary spending established by the bipartisan Budget Control Act. **Congress must return to regular budget order, avoid eleventh-hour omnibus spending bills and make the difficult but necessary budget choices** to safeguard America's financial future.