



September 18, 2022

Madam President Esther, all District Auxiliary officers and members,

First and foremost, and with great excitement, I'm happy to report that our new 2022-2023 ALA Legislative Chair, Dept. of CA, is our most recent Past Dept. President Dee Ann Graham. With that being said, I'm sure we'll have a fun year!

What truly brings me great joy about Legislation is the passing of bills that are now helping so many of wonderful veterans. And that's just what's happening the huge win and passing of the **PACT Act**. All of our veteran's exposed to toxins will get the care they deserve. I love that!

And for a little more great news...

On June 7, five important veteran-related bills were signed by the president and became public law.

The Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act – named after Marine Corps Officer Kate Thomas, who served near a burn pit in Iraq and died of breast cancer – expands eligibility for VA mammography screening to veterans who served in locations associated with toxic exposures. (P.L. 117-133)

The Veterans Rapid Retraining Assistance Program Restoration and Recovery Act gives VA the authority to restore important education benefits to veterans who were unable to complete a course or program as a result of the closure of an educational institution or the disapproval of a program by the state approving agency or the VA. (P.L. 117-138)

The Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans Act (MAMMO Act) strengthens and expands access to high-quality breast cancer screenings and life-saving cancer care for veterans nationwide. (P.L. 117-135)

The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Extension Act extends a program that compensates individuals who were exposed to radiation from atomic weapons testing, or uranium mining or processing, and who subsequently developed specified cancers or other medical conditions. (P.L. 117-139)

The Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act gives the VA's Office of Inspector General the authority to subpoena witnesses as necessary to carry out the duties of the office. (P.L. 117-136)

Already, there are so many bills out in full force that are ready for each of you, our Auxiliary family, to help support.

Most recently, on Wednesday, the House passed by voice vote five bills related to veterans:

- **HR 7846 – the Veterans' Compensation Cost of Living Adjustment Act**
- **HR 5916 – the Wounded Warrior Access Act**
- **HR 7939 – the Student Veteran Emergency Relief Act**
- **HR 8260 – the Faster Payments for Veterans' Survivors Act**
- **HR 7735 – the Improving Accessing to the VA Home Loan benefits Act**

I want to be very clear... our legislative efforts go above and beyond for the good others too. **The American Legion-supported Afghan Adjustment Act** of 2022 would:

- Establish a pathway to permanent legal status for Afghans brought to the United States on a temporary humanitarian status by allowing additional vetting to apply for permanent legal residency. This includes those who supported the U.S. mission in Afghanistan over the past two decades.
- Expand the SIV program to include four previously omitted groups, including the Female Tactical Teams of Afghanistan, the Afghan National Army Special Operations Command, the Afghan Air Force and the Special Mission Wing of Afghanistan.
- Establish a task force to develop and implement a strategy for supporting Afghans outside of the United States who are eligible for SIV status and require the Department of State to respond to congressional inquiries about SIV applications.

I'm humbly asking each and every one of you, please get involved and support our veteran legislative actions.

Let's make 2022 a year of legislative change! We've got this!

Go to... www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Bills

Once there, click on the red box at the top "Sign Up for Alerts." It's that easy!

Always yours in service,
Kimberly Stuhler
ALA D28 Legislative Chair