

Subject: Disability Appeals Reform Legislation

From: David W. Riley, DAV National Commander and Frances J. Costa, DAVA National Commander
(lbogle@dav.org)

To: joe@yktc.us;

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A JOINT MESSAGE FROM

DAV and the DAV Auxiliary

The Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, the Honorable Jeff Miller, introduced H.R. 5620, the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016. This legislation could significantly improve the ability of veterans to receive more timely and accurate decisions on their claims, and appeals of denied claims, for earned benefits.

This bill contains a new processing framework that would make positive and fundamental changes in the way VA adjudicates benefits. This legislation would create multiple options for veterans to redress benefits decisions. Under this legislation, for example, as long as a veteran continuously pursued redress within one year of the most recent decision, the veteran would be able to preserve the earliest effective filing date. This legislation also would allow veterans to present new evidence and obtain hearings before the Board of Veterans' Appeals or the Veterans Benefits Administration if they so desired.

Over the past few years, the number of appeals awaiting decisions has risen dramatically - to almost 450,000 - and the time for an appeal decision ranges between three and five years, a delay that is simply unacceptable. If faithfully implemented and if fully funded by Congress in the years ahead, H.R. 5620 would enable veterans to get more timely and accurate decisions on their claims and appeals.

Please use the prepared electronic letter to urge your Representative to cosponsor H.R. 5620 and to urge the House Leadership to bring this bill to the floor of the House for a vote before the end of the 114th Congress.

As always, we appreciate your support for DAV and your grassroots activism and participation in DAV CAN. Your advocacy helps make DAV a highly influential and persuasive organization in Washington.

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