

## A special note about the November issue

In the November issue of *The Postal Record*, we will name all of the members of the Veterans Group to thank them for their service.

To make sure that your name is included, take action now and join at [nalc.org/veterans](http://nalc.org/veterans). If you are a member of the group and wish not to have your name listed, please email your request to [veteransgroup@nalc.org](mailto:veteransgroup@nalc.org).

## Veterans Group

For more information, go to [nalc.org/veterans](http://nalc.org/veterans)

## Veterans' legislation roundup

**T**he 116th Congress has been active this session on considering legislation of importance to veterans. Here is a rundown of some of the most significant events and summaries of recent legislation around veterans' issues that are important to NALC and its members.

### Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations

On the appropriations front, in May the House of Representatives continued work on its Military Construction-Veterans Affairs appropriations bill, which passed out of committee. The \$108.1 billion measure boosts money for veterans' health care, reflecting an 11 percent boost above current levels, largely in response to rising health care costs.

Included in the funding measure is \$9.4 billion for mental health programs; \$840 million in medical and prosthetic research; \$582 million in veteran women-specific care; more than \$3 billion for the delivery of veteran benefits; and \$1.9 billion for homeless veteran assistance programs, among other provisions. It also provides \$10.5 billion for construction of critical military infrastructure and improvements to military family housing, and \$2 billion in hurricane disaster relief.

### Veterans-related legislation of note

While this Congress has seen numerous bills related to veterans' issues, the following are a few noteworthy ones that are being considered:

#### **H.R. 840—Veterans' Access to Child Care Act (passed in the House Feb. 8)**

Already passed in the House with overwhelming bipartisan support on Feb. 8, this bill authored by Rep.

Julia Brownley (D-CA) would make the Department of Veterans Affairs's (VA) Child Care Pilot Program permanent and expand it so that veterans across the country can have access to cost-free child care when they have VA medical appointments. Similar legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA).

#### **H.R. 1200—Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2019 (passed in the House May 21)**

This bill would provide a one-time cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to disabled veterans and their families as a disability and survivors' compensation, provided there is a COLA for Social Security recipients. The COLA would be the same as that set by the Social Security Administration and would cover benefits such as wartime disability compensation, a clothing allowance, and dependency and indemnity compensation for children and surviving spouses.

#### **H.R. 1812—Vet Center Eligibility Expansion Act (passed in the House May 21)**

Vet Centers provide social and psychological services to veterans, active-duty service members, and National Guard and Reserve members who meet certain criteria, and this bill would include additional veterans and service members. This expansion would include those who responded to a national emergency, major disaster, civil disorder and drug interdiction operations for the Coast Guard specifically.

#### **H.R. 2433—Veterans Preference Parity Act (introduced May 1)**

This bill would reform the hiring guidelines for federal positions to give even more preference to eligible



Reserve, National Guard and retired service members. The Veterans' Preference Parity Act modifies the current guidelines from a consecutive day requirement to a non-consecutive total-day threshold, allowing more service members to qualify for veterans' preference when competing for federal positions.

As always, NALC is carefully monitoring both good and bad legislation that is introduced and advanced in the 116th Congress, and will be sure to keep letter carriers aware of what may affect our membership.

### Join the NALC Veterans Group

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members—both active and retired letter carriers—who are also military veterans the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. It is free to join.

Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for your military service and membership in NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at [nalc.org/veterans](http://nalc.org/veterans).