



## Legislative

Welcome to another exciting year! Not only are we excited by starting a new program year. Arizona is paving the way for clean elections so that your vote and voice are heard. Arizona is one of the few states that invites all registered voters to decide what changes are made to Arizona statutes through propositions. From local elections and propositions to the White House – YOUR VOTE AND VOICE MATTERS! GET INVOLVED!

The VFW started as an advocacy group for Veterans and if you check out the history of its Legislation priorities and achievements, you'd be amazed at what our organization can accomplish when its members get involved by writing and contacting their Representatives.

### **Be an Advocate - Join the VFW Action Corps**

***The VFW Action Corps is not just for VFW or VFW Auxiliary members! Please invite family members, friends, neighbors, and colleagues to join and become veterans' advocates.*** This year, let us put a strong effort into signing up non-members to VFW Action Corps. Educating the general public on veteran issues builds a stronger voice in Washington. As veterans' advocates, we can all help shape public perception and influence our elected representatives to support improvements in the quality of life of our veterans, our service members, and their families.

People are our most important resource; they are the lifeblood of our organization. As members of the VFW Auxiliary, we have an opportunity to play an important role as grassroots advocates, helping increase awareness of legislative issues affecting our veterans and their families at local, state, and federal levels.

Every VFW Auxiliary member is a veterans' advocate! Help build our grassroots advocacy network by joining the VFW Action Corps. If you are not currently a subscriber, please visit [vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-efforts](http://vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-efforts) and click on the Action Corps image to sign up. Once subscribed, you will receive VFW Action Corps Weekly in your email inbox every Friday. This newsletter will keep you up to date on the most recent legislative initiatives affecting veterans.

The most important part of advocacy, besides knowing the issues, is responding to VFW Action Alerts when issued. This is where the rubber meets the road! Be an Effective Veterans Advocate! Respond To Special Legislative Action Alerts When Issued!

### **Be Informed – Know the VFW Priority Goals**

Educate yourself on legislative issues. Begin by knowing the VFW Priority Goals. Study the issues laid out clearly in the VFW Priority Goals. A copy can be found on the National website at [vfwauxiliary.org](http://vfwauxiliary.org) by selecting “What We Do” then clicking on “Legislative.”

The Priority Goals reflect the resolutions passed by the VFW to strengthen and ensure an adequate VA system for millions of current and future veterans.

They call for much-needed attention to crises such as veteran homelessness and suicide. They request fully funding research on traumatic brain injuries, reducing the claims backlog, fighting veteran unemployment, and improving timely transition assistance for veterans after leaving military service. The goals are grouped under six areas of concern:

**Budget**

**Health Care**

**Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs**

**Education, Employment and Transition Assistance**

**Military Quality of Life**

**National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW/MIA**

These goals are released in January each year by the VFW. Be sure you check the VFW or Auxiliary websites for the current Priority Goals. The VFW does not wait to hear how legislation will affect our veterans, service members and their families. They are proactive, helping shape it from the beginning and educating our lawmakers.

### **Be Engaged – Use the VFW and VFW Auxiliary Legislative Tools and Resources**

The VFW and VFW Auxiliary have worked hard to educate and prepare members so they can actively participate in the legislative process and urge our lawmakers to do what is right for our veterans and their families. To accomplish this, we must provide them with a foundation in three areas:

1. An understanding of our mission,
2. A mentor to train them, and
3. A role they can fill to be part of the team.

When a member is knowledgeable and prepared, they can play an active part in their Auxiliary's legislative efforts and assume responsibility within their community as an effective advocate for veterans.

We must be visible and involved in our communities. Success comes from building a network of advocates (VFW, Auxiliary, family, friends, colleagues, and other supporters) to promote awareness of the VFW and its Auxiliary and involving them in our activities and events.

Collaborate with civic organizations to plan, organize, and promote family-friendly legislative activities and events. Open your Post Home and host a town hall and/or candidate forum. Invite the local media to attend. Follow-up with news stories in the media (local newspapers, TV, radio) and on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) to publicize our efforts and get our message out to the public.

### **Step by Step—A Bill**

To follow the progress of a bill through the stages of the legislative process, visit [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov), where you may find a specific bill by its number or by a keyword or phrase. There are 9 steps a bill can go through before becoming a law.

<https://www.genome.gov/about-genomics/policy-issues/How-Bill-Becomes-Law>

### **Get Out the Vote**

Last year was an election year and there were several contested seats: 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, 34 out of the 100 seats in the U.S. Senate, plus the office of the President. We need to do our due diligence and study the issues affecting veterans and their families. Many states are contesting the results and Arizona is doing a recount.

We need to:

- Promote candidates and reelect legislators who will support our veterans and their families.
- Vote for candidates and reelect legislators who will support our veterans and their families.
- Encourage others to exercise their right to vote and to vote for candidates and reelect legislators who will support our veterans and their families.

We will continue the legacy of being the voice of our veterans and advocating for our service members and their families. Each of us is but one individual, but working together united in purpose, we become a powerful force that can overcome obstacles and achieve success by electing legislators who will honor and keep promises that were made to our veterans. We will rise to the challenge. We will make it happen and we will make a difference!

## **VFW in D.C.**

One of the most crucial responsibilities of the VFW Washington, D.C. office is to actively lobby Congress and the administration on behalf of veterans. The office monitors all legislation affecting veterans and alerts VFW and Auxiliary members about key legislation under consideration.

By testifying at committee hearings and interacting with congressional members, the VFW played an instrumental role in nearly every piece of veterans' legislation passed in the 20th Century, as well as bills developed in the 21st Century.

To contact the D.C. office:

Website: [vfw.org/advocacy](http://vfw.org/advocacy)

Phone: 202-543-2239

Mail: 200 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

## **Department Awards:**

\*The 6-8 most Outstanding Legislative Projects submitted by Auxiliaries will receive a plaque. Please submit a Project Report with no more than 3 photos, each time you promote and educate/train the community on the Legislative process and how we can advocate for our Veterans.

\*Every Auxiliary that submits a project will receive a citation.

## **National Awards:**

\*Citation to every Auxiliary that trains members on the legislative process. Auxiliaries must send a Project Report Form to the Department Chairman by March 31, 2022. The Project Report Form is available on the Department webpage – [vfwauxaz.org](http://vfwauxaz.org) under Programs/Legislative. The citation will be mailed directly from National Headquarters.

\*Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding training of members on the legislative process.