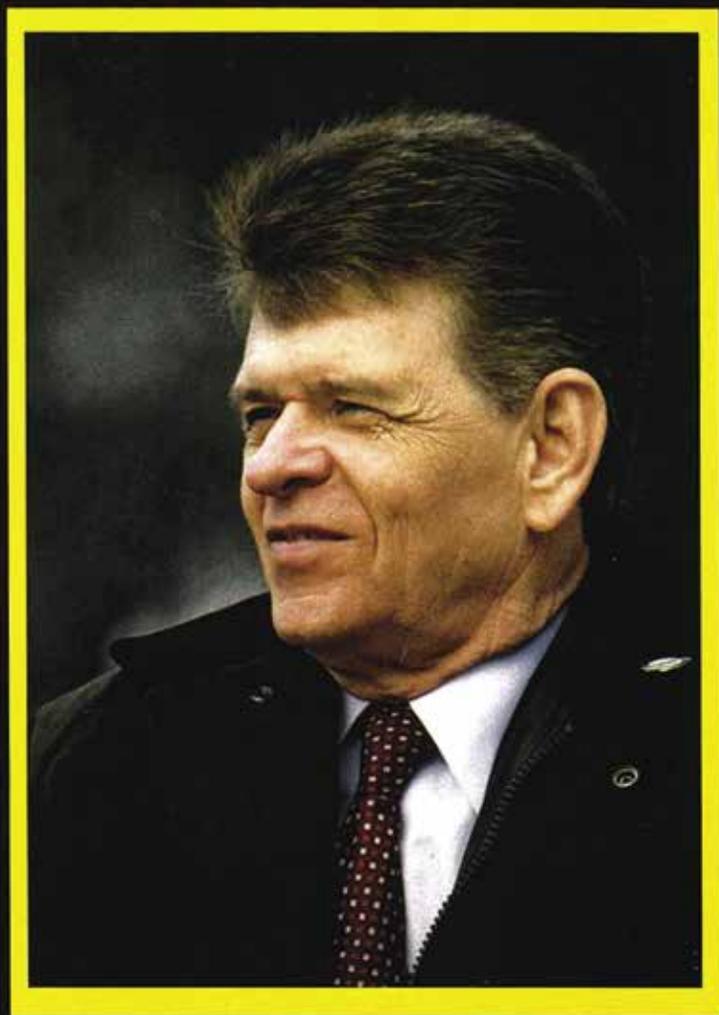


The SUNSHINE

The Official Publication of The Paralyzed Veterans of America • Florida Chapter

In Memory of Tom Corey 1944-2022



"You'd have to know me and what I do. It's not for glory or awards ... I do it because I feel lucky to be alive. I do it because I enjoy it."

"We fought for what was right, and for what was important for those who served, for those who didn't return, for those who are still suffering today."

- Peace, Tom



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Florida Chapter

Paralyzed Veterans of America Florida Chapter

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Have you moved or are you planning a move? If you are reading this Newsletter and it was not mailed to you, please call us or e-mail your updated address and contact information: (954) 565-8885 pvaf@aol.com

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 ext. 13587 or 13588

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 Miami VA Health Care Center
 1201 North West 16th Street, Room 1C-139
 Miami, Florida 33125
 305-575-7180 or 800-795-3591
 Fax: 305-575-7181

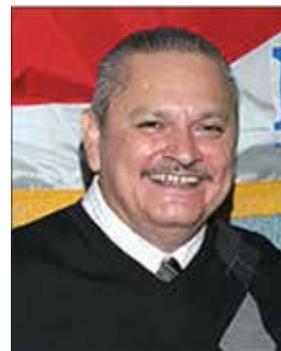
PVA SERVICE OFFICE

VA Regional Office
 P.O. Box 1437
 St. Petersburg, Florida 33731-9968
 727-319-7470 or 800-795-3594

President's Message

Juan Perez

PVAF Chapter President



OBITUARY FOR THOMAS COREY

Thomas Corey age 77, of Jupiter, Florida went home to the Lord on Monday, June 6, 2022. He was born December 24, 1944 in Detroit, MI, the second of twelve children to Patrick and Margaret Corey. Tom was drafted into the Army on December 7, 1966 as a squad leader with the 1st Air Calvary Division. While in combat in Vietnam during the Tet Offensive, he was shot in the neck, permanently damaging his spinal cord. Beating all odds of survival, Tom returned to Michigan to rehabilitate to live as a quadriplegic. For his heroic service, Tom was decorated with a Bronze Star Medal with V device for Valor, two Purple Hearts, an Air Medal, an Army Commendation Medal, a Presidential Unit Citation, a Valorous Unit Citation, a Republic Vietnam Gallantry Cross, and a Combat Infantry Badge.

In 1972, Tom moved to Palm Beach County, Florida, most recently living in Jupiter for the past sixteen years. During his transition to Florida he became resolute in fighting for Veteran's issues. In the mid-1970s, Tom became active in Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) and in 1980 joined Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). He was the founding president of VVA Palm Beach County Chapter 25, renamed the Thomas H. Corey Chapter at its 10 year anniversary. In 1985, Tom was elected to VVA's National Board of Directors and two years later elected as VVA's national secretary, and subsequently re-elected four times. In 1997, he was elected National Vice President and in 2001 became the National President of VVA, which he held until 2005.

To help heal the wounds of war, Tom made sixteen visits back to Vietnam, representing VVA's Veterans Initiative Task Force. It focused on locating POW/MIAs and Agent Orange issues with successful results. He was ultimately nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts. Tom was also a member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Association, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, 1st Air Calvary Association, and the National Association of Uniformed Services. He served as an Ombudsman/Program Specialist from the West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System to continue his mission to serve as an advocate for all Veterans.

Tom is pre-deceased by his parents, Patrick and Margaret, his first wife Mary Kern and second wife, Sharon Loree. He is survived by his son, Brian Corey (Nathan White), of Port St Lucie, FL and daughter, Trang Corey, of Palm Beach Gardens, FL; siblings, Rick (Karen) Corey of Annapolis, MD, Carol Maxwell of Hazel Park, MI, Diane (Dan) Pearsall of Sterling Heights, MI, Linda (Jerry) Clark of New Boston, MI, Jim Corey (Cathy Locke Ferraro) of Adrian, MI, Kathy Phillips (Alan Wood) of Brighton, MI, Jill Corey Hennick of Tucker, GA, Michelle (Mike) Panyard of Pleasant Ridge, MI, and Maureen Corey Smith of Wolverine Lake, MI; his long time dedicated caregiver and loving friend, Janet Alheit-Crane and her husband, Doug and daughter, Sierra, of Jupiter FL; as well as many nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

Thanks for that, friend. They say that something dies in the soul when a friend leaves, and our farewell has left us broken. But a friend never leaves; he lives forever in our hearts. "You were a true friend. Fly high friend from the Board of Directors, Volunteer and Staff of PVA Florida Chapter our condolences to all his family and friends. We will miss you Tom rest in peace.



Calendar of Events 2022

August 2022

August 23, 2022

BOD Meeting
Via ZOOM

September 2022

September 06, 2022

General Membership Meeting
Via Zoom

September 20, 2022

BOD Meeting
Via ZOOM

October 2022

October 18, 2022

BOD Meeting
Via ZOOM

Visit us on the web @WWW.PVAFL.ORG

Membership Report

As of July 31, 2022 PVA Florida Chapter membership consists of 348 regular Members & 122 Associates Members:

PVA Florida Chapter welcomes new member:

The Sunshine

Wants to know what's on Your Mind?

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VA Facilities

Veterans Health Administration

Toll-Free Hotline (medical care)
1-877-222-8387

VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg

PO Box 1437
St. Petersburg, FL 33731
1-800-827-1000

Regional Processing Office

Atlanta, GA (educational claims)
PO Box 54346
Atlanta, GA 30308
1-888-442-4551

VA Insurance Center

(VA Insurance)
PO Box 42954
Philadelphia, PA 19101
1-800-669-8477

VA Health Administrative Center:

(CHAMPVA and Spina Bida health care)
CHAMPVA inquiries:
PO Box 65023, Denver, CO 80206-5023
CHAMPVA claims:
PO Box 65024, Denver, CO 80206-5024
Spina Bida inquiries and claims:
PO Box 65025, Denver, CO 80206-5025
1-800-733-8387

VA Loan Guaranty Eligibility Center

(Certificates of eligibility)
PO Box 20729
Winston Salem, NC 27120
1-888-244-6711

National Cemetery Administration

Office of Memorial Programs:
(Headstones & markers)
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420
1-800-697-6947
Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) Unit
Chicago VA Regional Office
1-800-829-4833

Miami VA Health Care Medical Center:

1201 NW 16 Street
Miami, FL 33125
1-888-276-1785

VA Outpatient Clinic

9800 West Commercial Blvd.
Sunrise, FL 33351
Phone: (954) 475-5500

VA Medical Center

7305 N Military Trail
West Palm Beach, FL 33410-6400
1-800-972-8262

Vice President

Maria M. Miranda Benitez



Chapter Members and Family, hope all is well and you all have been staying cool, safe, and healthy. I went to the PVA 76th Annual Convention from May 16-21 in which they had training for the Executive Directors, Chapter Presidents Meeting, New Resolutions that our National Director was there representing us, and again our own Mr. Charles Brown is the PVA President.

One of those resolutions was accepting as full member all Multiple Sclerosis veterans with or without legions in the spine, and the beginning of the Multiple Sclerosis Committee working diligently to fulfill its mission to assist our PVA members who live with MS, as a member of the MS Committee for PVA I will be bringing you all the information, plus if you have any question, please don't hesitate to contact me. To give you one of the things I learned at the 76th Annual Convention was that PVA 1st President in 1947 Mr. Gilbert Moss was a MS patient.

Another resolution was that our brothers and sisters with ALS will only need a diagnosis to be a member they will not have to go through the entire process, they have enough to deal with, they are trying to make things easy. There were many things that happened and resolutions as well.

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games was July 7-12, 2022, and from PVAF our Sports Director José Gonzalez was proud to have with him 11 veterans, 2 coaches and one volunteer. The team brought home 4 Gold, 5 Silver and 2 Bronze. They had an amazing time you can see some of it at <https://wheelchairgames.org/about/tempe-2022/>. Maybe you couldn't go to the wheelchair games but, here we are having bowling in the Fort Lauderdale area, Boccia practice/games every Tuesday on the Sunrise Center from 1pm-3pm, PVAF teamed up with Shake-a-Leg, so Let's Go Fishing every Thursday from 10am- 3pm. There are things to do, as long we all stay safe, come on and join a group and get out and enjoy it. Let's stay hydrate, it's very hot, but you can still enjoy it and we will continue to find ways to get to you.

PVAF is here for you and your family, let's do more together. Remember you need anything, and we can help please contact our office (954)565-8885.



Advocacy Report

Redzuan Razak



Hello everyone! As most of you may know the mid-terms is coming up this November. I hope that you all are registered to vote. More importantly this is the perfect time for us to write to our congressmen and senators to support PVA's legislative priorities. We have made it easy for you through our app which you can use on your smart phones or computer. If you would like you can also take a picture of the QR code shared on this article. Again, it looks like a barcode with a little dinosaur in the middle, to utilize this all you have to do is to open the camera on your phone and point it on the code you will then see an option and it will take you directly to the website. For all of you who would prefer to input it manually on a web browser the address is as follows <https://www.voterveice.net/mobile/PVA/home>.

After years of advocating, since I have been advocacy director really, we have won a minor victory when it comes to air travel. The Department of Transportation has released a disability bill of rights when it came to air travel. The rights are as follows:

- The Right to Be Treated with Dignity and Respect.
- The Right to Receive Information About Services and Aircraft Capabilities and Limitations.
- The Right to Receive Information in an Accessible Format.
- The Right to Accessible Airport Facilities.
- The Right to Assistance at Airports.
- The Right to Assistance on the Aircraft.
- The Right to Travel with an Assistive Device or Service Animal.
- The Right to Receive Seating Accommodations.
- The Right to Accessible Aircraft Features.
- The Right to Resolution of a Disability-Related Issue.

We still have a ways to go to change the way we and our mobility equipment are treated when we travel but it's a start. To read these rights further in detail you can find the information on DOT's website by entering the following web address. <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/disabilitybillofrights>

PVA has also sent out a survey with some PVA swag to each of our members. If you did not receive it please let us know. Please fill out these surveys as it will help us better serve you by increasing recreational activities and programs that are important to you. The only way for us to know what you enjoy doing and would like to do is by getting feedback from you. We want to know what is important to you. And as an incentive PVA will be giving each member who completes the survey an extra gift. (shhh.... It more PVA SWAG)

We also need to get your contact information updated so that we may inform you in future chapter events and communications. It is also important for us to have your current contact information so that we can update you to any changes and improvement in your benefits due to changes in policy and legislation. We are working with national PVA to figure out a better way to keep in touch with our members and to keep you engaged with the chapter.

I would also challenge you to get more involved with the chapter, volunteer, show up to events, help another veteran out. I would even challenge most of you to run for the board of directors. We need new ideas, we need suggestions from you all on how we can forward the chapter, make us stronger, more inclusive, more transparent and an organization that can better the lives of veterans in South Florida.



Classified Ads

Spokesman classified section is provided at no cost to PVAF members. Please call Juan Perez by the first of the month prior to publication if you would like to advertise with us: (954) 565-8885.

If you are interested in ensuring quality health care, wheelchair sports, recreation, advocacy, ADA education and helping to improve the lives of those with SCI/D call today to Become a PVAF Associate Member! (954) 565-8885



Paralyzed Veterans of America



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To Update Your Information:
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memberupdate@pva.org

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Orinell Hillman
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Chlorid1@pva.org

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Yira M. Rojas MSN, RN
Nursing Professional Development Team
Miami VA Healthcare System
The National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Patients with MS, experience changes with their body because the immune system attacks the protective sheath (myelin) that covers the nerve fibers and causes communication problems between your brain and the rest of the body. Ultimately MS affects the brain, spinal cord, eyes and muscle control. It is basically a disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information within the body (National Multiple Sclerosis Society, 2022).

If you are a veteran and recently been diagnose with multiple sclerosis (MS) then you should come to the Miami VA and inquire how occupational therapists can help people live with MS. An occupational therapist helps a patient to learn activities required for daily living which are learned via rehabilitation sessions. The occupational therapist will ask a few questions about yourself to get a better understanding of what treatment is best suited to reach your goals. The Miami VA has a team of specialist located in the Spinal Cord Injury Unit and a rehab team on the second floor. These teams consist of neurologist specialized in MS, occupational, recreational and physical therapist who work Monday - Friday. The therapists are trained in motor exercises which consist of upper and lower body exercises, driving evaluation, training on adaptive devices for daily living and many other skills to help manage the potential challenges a Veterans deals with when diagnosed with MS.

Another amazing team is The National MS Society. This site is full of information and resources an MS patient needs. The National MS Society team of experts are working on ways to improve MS living through research. Driving a focus on rehabilitation research, deals with the challenges to of MS life through improving physical therapy in order to help the patient achieve the best physical health. Other projects include: "Researchers at the University of North Carolina and collaborators reported that balance problems that were not detected in people with MS while walking were evident using virtual reality-based testing." (National MS Society, 2022). This acquired knowledge can be used in hope to detect 'balance and address problems in people living with MS before falls occur' (National MS Society, 2022).

The Miami VA and MS Team are here to help you move your life forward, safely and in a positive way. They have the resources to help you manage MS, find programs or services in your area, and provide you with the support you need. So, if you are a Veteran, come and see us and get your personalized assessment.

Reference

National Multiple Sclerosis Society (2022) from, What is MS? | National Multiple Sclerosis Society (nationalmssociety.org)

Rehabilitation Research/National Multiple Sclerosis Society (2022) from, <https://www.nationalmssociety.org/Research/Research-We-Fund/Restoring-What-s-Been-Lost/Rehabilitation-Research>

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On Location

Florida Chapter

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIRS GAMES 2022, PHOENIX, AZ



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CHARITY EVENT



Florida Chapter

PRESENTS OUR 2022 **GOLF** TOURNAMENT



SATURDAY OCTOBER 1, 2022

Shotgun Start - 1:00 PM

Support Paralyzed Veterans of America
Florida Chapter in Improving the Lives of
those with a spinal cord injury or dysfunction





PVA Florida Clubhouse Birthdays

PVAF, Improving the Lives of Those with Spinal Cord Injury and Disease

July Birthday

David Jampolsky..... July 01
 Anthony Muzio July 01
 Otis E. Hudson, Sr. July 01
 Sim Putmon, Jr..... July 0
 Gary W. Wilburn July 02
 Edward O. Holloway July 03
 Gabriela A. Perez..... July 03
 Charles O. Brown July 06
 Richard D. DeMarzo..... July 07
 Matthew S. Kleemann..... July 07
 Forrest L. Cole July 08
 Harry S. Beane July 08
 Juanjose Amador, Jr. July 08
 Brian J. Ouimet..... July 09
 Paul F. Gall..... July 12
 Donna L. Higgins..... July 14
 James M. Byas July 22
 Allan H. Spence July 23
 Arjean M. Wilson July 23
 Harry Henderson, Jr..... July 25
 Delbert D. Hillebert..... July 25
 Sidney Luxenberg July 26
 Robert A. Frongillo..... July 26
 Arlington (Art) Towers July 26
 Henry G. Resling..... July 27
 Mark B. Addison..... July 27
 Terry G. Morgan July 30
 Chris J. Ungrady..... July 30
 Monty S. Bates..... July 31

August Birthday

Kira M. Hall..... August 02
 Herman W. Hoffman August 03
 Hartley E. Key..... August 04
 Wayne E. Hooper August 04
 Carlos L. Delgado August 04
 Manuel Audain August 06
 Andres Trujillo, Jr..... August 07
 Lawrence Horn August 09
 Richard H. Riviera August 11
 Aukuso Siuta..... August 11
 John Paul Oriol..... August 11
 Allison G. Alvarado August 12
 Joseph G. Belton, Sr. August 13
 Allan S. Alvarenga August 13
 Paul W. Lane..... August 15
 David A. Swart August 15
 Raymond Walawender..... August 16
 Kathryn A. Mangone August 17
 Jerry Jones..... August 19
 Tom S. Paskal August 21
 Steven G. Schock August 21
 Keith W. Vivyan August 22
 Sammie L. Gipson August 24
 Arthur L. Nickler August 25
 John A. Anderson August 25
 Roberto A. Sterling August 25
 Jose D. Gonzalez..... August 26
 Steven C. Davolt..... August 27
 Christopher N. Stultz August 28
 Leedell A. Brown, Sr..... August 29
 Felix Perez August 29
 Daniel A. Eppler August 31

September Birthday

Dennis Norris..... September 01
 Desiree A. Francis September 01
 Ester J. Havern..... September 03
 James R. Woods..... September 05
 Alvaro N. Cordoba..... September 05
 Jon Newcomer September 06
 Herbert W. Lozott September 10
 Raul Villamia, Jr..... September 10
 Redzuan A. Razak..... September 11
 Prepy A. Thermidor..... September 12
 Roberto Welch..... September 12
 Roger L. Goss September 14
 John N. Irmes..... September 15
 Byron C. Moore September 15
 John A. Wikel..... September 16
 Nelson Bordas..... September 17
 Enrique G. Petrovich.... September 17
 Paul R. Coles September 17
 Herbert L. Thompson .. September 18
 Sebastiano Torre September 19
 Bruce M. Clark..... September 19
 Lawrence J. Silvestri..... September 19
 Carl J. Paul..... September 19
 Robert L. Mallock September 20
 James S. Scott..... September 21
 Howard Anderson..... September 22
 Jorge Martinez September 22
 James Hayes..... September 23
 Stephen D. Cantagallo September 24
 Beatrice T. Baez September 25
 Juan P. Perez September 26
 Gerald S. Izydorczak September 26
 James H. Holmes, Jr..... September 26
 Michael T. Hampton..... September 27
 Earnest Whipper September 29
 William A. Crites..... September 29
 Mark G. Didia..... September 29

News Round-Up

Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.

Written and produced by Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department

PASSAGE OF PACT ACT DELAYED

In the last Washington Update, we reported that the Senate had passed H.R. 3967, the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 or PACT Act, a comprehensive legislative package that will deliver all generations of toxic-exposed veterans their long-overdue VA health care and benefits. Unfortunately, House action on the bill has been delayed due to a parliamentary issue. Further action hinges on addressing it. Congressional champions are continuing to work on a solution. Both the House and Senate are now on recess; so, final passage will not take place until later in July at the earliest.

SENATE ANNOUNCEMENT SPELLS END OF AIR PROCESS

On June 27, a bipartisan group of Senators released a statement announcing their opposition to the Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission moving forward. The VA MISSION Act of 2018 required the VA to conduct a nationwide study and issue recommendations for future investments in VA health care facilities to the AIR Commission (PVA Executive Director Carl Blake was nominated by the White House to serve on the commission). This announcement effectively spells the end of the AIR process.

PVA National President Charles Brown released a statement noting our concerns with the “delays in standing up the AIR Commission” and also our “ongoing concerns regarding the validity of VA’s recommendations and the data on which they rested.” President Brown also called on Congress to pass “needed reforms to help VA better manage its infrastructure and provide significant financial investments to ensure that the SCI/D system of care and the broader VA health care system are able to fully meet the needs of all catastrophically disabled veterans, their families, and caregivers.”

PVA TESTIFIES ON PENDING LEGISLATION

On June 22, PVA Associate Legislative Director Julie Howell testified before the House Veterans’ Affairs Health Subcommittee on six pending bills, including H.R. 1957, the Veterans Infertility Treatment Act. This important bill would allow the VA to recognize infertility as a medical condition, therefore, allowing infertility treatments to be available to all veterans enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration whether their infertility was service connected or not. It also would allow veterans with infertility to utilize donated gametes, a must for anyone who has a genital injury and is unable to produce viable genetic material on their own.

Assisted reproductive technology is an extraordinary medical advancement that allows people with infertility to fulfill their dreams of a family. Ms. Howell urged Congress to pass this bill quickly and expressed hope that they would act to provide access to surrogacy as well.

PVA also offered its support for H.R. 6273, the VA Zero Suicide Demonstration Project Act, which would allow the VA to establish a pilot program to help combat veteran suicide, and H.R. 7589, the REMOVE Copays Act, which would eliminate copays for a veteran’s first three annual mental health appointments. The only bill PVA did not endorse was H.R. 1216, the Modernizing Veterans’ Health Care Eligibility Act, which seeks to establish a 15-member, bipartisan commission to assess veterans’ eligibility for VA health care. The bill lacked clarity on why an outside panel was needed and we strongly believe Congress should continue to exercise its exclusive authority to conduct oversight of the VA health care system which includes eligibility.

You can watch a recording of the hearing [here](#) and read PVA’s written statement [here](#). To send a letter to your Representative in support of H.R. 1957, [click here](#).

News Round-Up

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MTA COMMITS TO A 95 PERCENT ACCESSIBLE SUBWAY SYSTEM BY 2055

New York Governor Kathy Hochul (D) and disability advocates reached a class action settlement agreement affirming the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) commitment towards an accessible New York City subway system. The agreement is a result of two class action lawsuits and is still subject to court approval. Under the agreement, MTA will add elevators or ramps to create a stair-free path of travel at 95 percent of the currently inaccessible subway stations by 2055. Currently, only 131 stations in the transit system are fully accessible via elevators and ramps. The agreement includes making 81 more subway stations accessible by 2025, another 85 accessible by 2035, 90 more by 2045, and the last 90 by 2055. The remaining 5 percent that will not be made accessible have engineering issues that would make adding elevators or ramps difficult, and in some cases, impossible.

FTA FUNDS IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FOR UNDERSERVED GROUPS

On June 16, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced awards of approximately \$8.4 million to 17 projects in 16 states to improve public transportation for underserved groups, with a focus on health and wellness. FTA's Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility (ICAM) Pilot Program - which received millions more in funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - increases access for Americans all over the country, particularly to health care appointments, by building partnerships among health, transportation, and other service providers.

By improving the coordination of transportation to critical services for people who have been underserved in the past, ICAM supports the Administration's commitment to improving public health, including mental health. As part of the total to be awarded through the ICAM program, \$4.6 million came through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL AIRPORT ADDS TRAVEL EXPERIENCE CENTER WITH MOCK AIRCRAFT CABIN

A new Travel Confidently MSP Education Center was recently unveiled at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP). This one-of-a-kind facility features a mock aircraft cabin to support airport and public safety training and serve airport programs that help build travel confidence through pre-flight experiences.

The Travel Confidently MSP Education Center will serve multiple purposes, most notably enhancing the Navigating MSP Program, which provides flyers with sensory, physical, or cognitive disabilities, or those with a fear of flying, a place to practice boarding and gives service dogs the ability to become familiar with the surroundings of an aircraft cabin. It will also allow airport public safety professionals and airline support crews to further train in a realistic setting.

The new space features a 33-foot-long mock aircraft cabin that was previously used to train Delta's in-flight teams in Atlanta. The components of the former training cabin, and 42 seats from a retired Boeing 737, were shipped to MSP and reassembled in its new space. For more information, [click here](#).

INCLUSIVE HOME DESIGN ACT INTRODUCED IN SENATE

The Senate version of the Inclusive Home Design Act was introduced on June 22 by Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL). Like its House companion, H.R. 4695, introduced last year by Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), S. 4447 would require all newly constructed, federally assisted, single-family houses and townhouses to meet minimum standards of "visitability" for persons with disabilities. Under current law, accessibility standards apply largely to multifamily housing and studies have shown that affordable, accessible housing is in very short supply. (See [How Well Does the Housing Stock Meet Accessibility Needs? An Analysis of the 2019 American Housing Survey](#) | Joint Center for Housing Studies (harvard.edu)) The bill, which PVA supports, was

News Round-Up

*Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.
Written and produced by Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department*

referred to the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee.

BILL TO PROTECT VETERANS AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES FROM HOUSING DISCRIMINATION INTRODUCED IN SENATE

On June 23, Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA), introduced S. 4485, the Fair Housing Improvement Act of 2022. PVA has endorsed this legislation that would protect veterans and low-income families from housing discrimination. The Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. S. 4485 would add source of income and veteran status to the list of protected classes. It would prohibit landlords from denying housing to individuals who use Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) vouchers, benefits received through Social Security, income received by a court order, payment from a trust or guardian, or any other lawful source of income. Companion legislation was introduced as H.R. 8213 on the same day by Representative Scott Peters (D-CA).

ABLE AGE ADJUSTMENT ACT INCLUDED IN EARN ACT

In its markup of the Enhancing American Retirement Now (EARN) Act on June 22, the Senate Finance Committee included language from the ABLE Age Adjustment Act. Under current law, ABLE accounts are tax-advantaged savings and retirement instruments that are available to individuals who acquire their disabilities prior to age 26. The bipartisan ABLE Age Adjustment Act, which PVA supports, would allow people who develop their disabilities before age 46 to establish ABLE accounts, allowing them to save for future expenses without placing needed disability services, health care, and income support at risk. The EARN Act, to which the bill was attached, makes enhancements to workplace savings plans and contains some provisions that are the same as or similar to those proposed in the House, which passed the Securing a Strong Retirement Act (H.R. 2954) in late March in a bipartisan 414-5 vote. If passed by the full Senate, differences in the two versions would need to be reconciled before going to the President for his signature.

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES VA SPENDING BILL

On June 23, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations approved its fiscal year (FY) 2023 VA funding bill. The measure provides a total of \$135 billion in discretionary appropriations for the VA, an increase of \$22.8 billion above the 2022 enacted level but about \$46 million below the President's budget request. \$118 billion of that amount would go directly toward veterans' medical care, an increase of \$21.8 billion above the 2022 enacted level and \$66 million above the budget request. Spending on gender-specific care for women veterans (\$911 million) as well as medical and prosthetics research (\$926 million) could increase significantly if this version of the bill is adopted by Congress as a whole. Also included in the bill is language making the availability of in vitro fertilization part of VA's regular medical services package and it would allow the use of donated gametes and embryos. More information about the bill's VA provisions is available [here](#).

HOUSE PASSES STRONG ACT

Recently, the House passed H.R. 6411, the Support the Resiliency of Our Nation's Great (STRONG) Veterans Act of 2022, which is a comprehensive mental health package comprised of several smaller House and Senate bills. The bill seeks to increase and improve training for VA's mental health provider workforce as well as shore up the Veterans Crisis Line to meet the projected surge of callers when a new 3-digit hotline number (988) goes live in July. Other provisions require explicit mental health and suicide prevention outreach by the VA to traditionally underserved veteran populations, including Native veterans; expanded peer mental health services to reach more veterans; open eligibility for Vet Center services to more student veterans and families who have lost veterans to suicide; and increased mental health research. The bill now awaits Senate approval.

News Round-Up

*Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.
Written and produced by Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department*

NEWS OF NOTE

Disability Employment Awareness Month Theme Announced

The Department of Labor recently announced that “Disability: Part of the Equity Equation” will be the theme for October’s observance of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Led by its Office of Disability Employment Policy, the department’s annual celebration acknowledges the contributions to the nation’s economy made by workers with disabilities, current and past. The commemoration also showcases supportive and inclusive policies and practices benefiting workers and employers. The announcement of NDEAM 2022 can be found [here](#). Resources and celebration tool kits will be posted on the site in the near future.

VA Can Help Veterans Access Telehealth Services

If you would benefit from video telehealth services but do not have internet access or a video-capable device, the VA may be able to help. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Help for Caregivers

The Building Better Caregivers® is a six-week online workshop developed by Stanford University to help those who care for veterans reset, recharge, and discover new information so they can be the best caregiver they can be. [Click on the link above to learn more.](#)

VA Adopts Login.gov for a Unified Veteran Sign-in Experience

By creating an account on Login.gov, veterans can now use the same login and password to access a growing list of federal government websites, including VA.gov, My HealtheVet and VA’s new Health and Benefits mobile app. Login.gov is a secure digital credentialing system operated by the General Services Administration’s Technology Transformation Services. [Click on Login.gov to learn more.](#)

HEARINGS & CHATS

New Audio Chat Available

PVA National Advocacy Director Susan Prokop and PVA Advocacy Attorney Danica Gonzalves recently held an Audio Chat with Becoming RentABLE CEO/Founder Lorraine Woodward. Becoming RentABLE focuses on accessible short-term vacation rental properties. To listen to the Chat or read the transcript, please [click here.](#)

Upcoming Veterans’ Affairs Committee Action

Please visit the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee webpage and the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee webpage for information on upcoming hearings and markups.



On Location

Florida Chapter

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIRS GAMES 2022, PHOENIX, AZ





On Location

Florida Chapter

FISHING WITH SHAKE A LEG





Florida Chapter

Membership Application

An individual is eligible for membership by meeting the following criteria: (1) is a citizen of the United States; (2) was regularly enlisted, inducted or commissioned for active duty service in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard of the United States, or our allies as evidenced by other-than-dishonorable character of service documented by a verifiable DD-214 or DD-215 (entry-level separation not acceptable); (3A) was separated from the service in the Armed Forces under conditions other than dishonorable; or (3B) is on active duty or must continue to serve after the cessation of hostilities; and (4) has suffered a spinal cord injury or disease (such as MS, ALS), whether or not service connected in origin. Membership is free. **Complete and return application to the chapter of choice or by mail/email to: Paralyzed Veterans of America Membership Department, 801 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006; (E) members@pva.org. Providing the requested information is entirely voluntary but required for membership with Paralyzed Veterans of America.**

Chapter Name: _____

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____ Social Security Number: _____ Male Female

Race/Ethnicity:

- Asian/Pacific Islander African American/Descent Hispanic/Latino
- Native American/Alaskan Native Caucasian

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

VETERAN STATUS INFORMATION

Please submit the following with application:

- DD Form 214 showing character of discharge.
- Medical evidence of spinal cord injury or involvement (medical records or physician’s statement).

Proof of active duty status must be verified prior to membership approval.

Have you been discharged under conditions that are less than honorable? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Are you a United States citizen? Yes No

Do you have a spinal cord injury or disease? Yes No If disease, specify: _____

Is your spinal cord injury or spinal cord disease service connected? Yes No

If Paralyzed Veterans of America is your accredited representative, do you permit PVA Service Officers to provide information to PVA National Membership Department relative to your membership eligibility? Yes No

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, that I have read and meet the qualifications and I understand that my membership could be denied or revoked if any information provided is inaccurate.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Witness Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

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