

Shulkin Gets Hundreds of Questions Online From Vets

NEW YORK, NY (February 1, 2017) – As U.S. troops around the world are engaged in conflict, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) continues its call for increased attention to the issues affecting veterans and their families when they return home. Today, IAVA will hand deliver questions from its membership to the national media and Congress that they have for Dr. David Shulkin, nominee for Secretary of Veterans Affairs. IAVA, the nation's leading voice of the Post-9/11 Generation of Veterans, looks to the media and committee members to press Dr. Shulkin to outline his vision for the future of VA.

“This week, as we mourn the first servicemember lost during the new administration, it is critical that we renew focus on the issues impacting the 22 million American veterans” **said Paul Rieckhoff, Founder and CEO of IAVA.** “We know and appreciate Dr. Shulkin’s leadership, but nobody gets a free pass—especially after so many years of disappointment and scandal. If confirmed as Secretary of VA, Dr. Shulkin will have an incredibly complicated job ahead of him. The VA Secretary may be the second hardest job in Washington. IAVA members worldwide are watching to hear how he plans to tackle deficiencies and capitalize on strengths within the massive agency. Today, Dr. Shulkin faces the toughest job interview he will ever have. The questions from Senators will be critical, but the questions from veterans are more poignant.”

IAVA encourages the committee members to press for answers to vital questions posed by IAVA members and to review the hundreds posted online by veterans and families nationwide. A comprehensive list of questions submitted by IAVA members [can be found here](#), and include:

- Will you, here and now, pledge to appeal to POTUS to exempt military veterans from the across the board hiring freeze?
- We just have one question- over the 12 years and 8 months since our son died by suicide while we sought help from the VA, what have you done – not talked about but actually done – to make the VA truly responsive to our veterans’ needs while so many others stood by while so many thousands – tens of thousands continued to kill themselves?
- If the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is repealed, what will you do about the 300,000 veterans who presently are insured under the ACA? Education has proven to lead to better life and health outcomes which would help the VA. How do we get more Vets to use their GI Bill?
- Will the VA address the burn pit and environmental hazards Iraq and Afghanistan veterans have faced? Will constrictive bronchitis be addressed?
- Do you support expansion of Choice to allow a vet to seek services that are peer reviewed and medical supported that is not offered by VAMC?
- How will you ensure that women veterans receive equitable lifespan

health care at the VA? How will you reach out to Select Reserve to ensure their care?

- Female service members who suffered sexual assault now have PTSD: what will you do to target and help these women get the mental health counseling they need?
- What is your plan to decrease the number of veteran suicides?
- In your role, how do you plan to support caregivers and family members of servicemembers?
- Do you promise to continue the Obama VA effort to eliminate homelessness among our veteran population and to increase mental health spending? How do you, as a non-veteran, understand veteran issues?

IAVA encourages all Americans to stay up to date on the transition at VA and on all issues affecting veterans and their families by visiting IAVA.org and exploring the [IAVA Policy Agenda](#). More about IAVA's young, diverse and highly-engaged membership [can be found here](#).

IAVA is the leading voice of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in Washington and communities nationwide. Led by veterans, our non-partisan advocacy, awareness and case-management support work ensures that Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families are supported, empowered and never forgotten.

Since our founding by Iraq vet Paul Rieckhoff in 2004, IAVA has been a juggernaut in Washington and nationwide, creating and driving the national conversation on issues ranging from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) to women veteran issues to veteran unemployment. IAVA's dedicated staff in Washington, D.C., powered by a diverse and rapidly-growing membership, leads this work, advocating on behalf of our members daily. We also train our member veterans to be powerful advocates for their local community. IAVA is focused on results and has delivered historic impacts. Every year since 2007, in an increasingly gridlocked political environment and with an extremely limited operating budget, IAVA has passed at least one major piece of groundbreaking legislation for our community ranging from the Post-9/11 GI Bill (2008), to the VOW to Hire Heroes Act (2011), to The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act (2015).

See IAVA's Advocacy Program Digital Hub the full list of victories and to learn more about how you can help.