

[IAVA Fights for Right to Hold VA Employees Accountable at U.S. Appeals Court](#)

NEW YORK, NY (December 5, 2016) – Today, in Washington D.C., IAVA joined eleven other veteran and military service organizations in front of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit to fight to keep in place authority of the Department of Veterans Affairs to hold staff accountable for their failures. *Helman v. Department of Veterans Affairs* claims that certain sections of the Veterans Choice, Access and Accountability Act (VACAA) are unconstitutional. Specifically, if upheld, a previous court decision could prevent the new authority granted to the VA by Congress to hold senior-level employees accountable for misconduct.

“In 2014, IAVA joined with our partners across the veteran community to help pass the Veterans Choice, Access and Accountability Act, which aimed to not only make healthcare more easily attainable for veterans but also ensure senior-level VA were held accountable” **said Jackie Maffucci, IAVA Chief Policy Officer.** “IAVA stood proudly today on behalf of our more than 425,000 members and supporters to defend the VA’s new authority to hold bad actors accountable and we will relentlessly fight against any attempt to dismantle this critical tool.”

IAVA signed an amicus brief to the court arguing that the new right granted to the Department of Veterans Affairs to handle misconduct of senior-level employees is constitutional. This authority was granted to the Secretary of the VA and administrators to hold negligent senior-level employees accountable for their actions after the 2014 VA crisis in Phoenix.

“A victory in this case will set an important precedent and will have tremendous significance for the millions of veterans, many of them IAVA members, who depend on VA hospitals across the country for their care,” **continued Maffucci.** “The right of veterans to have access to timely and quality healthcare is a right IAVA has sought to uphold and continues to advocate and fight for, not just for the post-9/11 generation, but for all those veterans who came before and for those who will come after. IAVA is grateful for the opportunity to come before the Court and intervene in defense of the statute and will continue to fight to ensure that all officials are held accountable to those who have sacrificed so much.”

IAVA is the leading voice of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in Washington and communities nationwide. Led by veterans, our non-partisan advocacy work ensures that Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families are supported, protected and never forgotten. Since 2004, IAVA has been a juggernaut in Washington, 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. 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.