

[IAVA Stands with Secretary Bob McDonald to Fully Fund VA](#)

Secretary briefs The Military Coalition on Capitol Hill at IAVA's request

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 15, 2015) – Today, Secretary Bob McDonald addressed Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) staff and fellow members of The Military Coalition ([TMC](#)) – an influential Washington, D.C.-based consortium of 32 military and veterans groups – on the priorities at the VA and the need for Congress to fully fund the Department in order to provide the essential services and benefits our veterans have earned. The Secretary briefed the group at the invitation of IAVA.

“As the FY2016 funding legislation for the VA moves its way through Congress, it is imperative that Secretary McDonald receive both the resources and the flexibility needed to restore the credibility of the Department of Veterans Affairs,” said IAVA CEO and Founder Paul Rieckhoff. “We’re pleased the Secretary joined today’s TMC meeting at our invitation to ensure that veterans’ voices continue to be heard. IAVA and others in The Military Coalition believe that balancing the budget on the backs of our veterans is simply unacceptable, and we’ll continue to work with the VA and Congress to pass a fair budget.”

Over the expressed objections of the the Secretary and President Obama, the House Appropriations Committee last month passed its FY2016 VA funding bill that was \$1.4 billion below the original VA request. If allowed, this cut could hamper the services that tens of thousands of veterans receive, and impact the VA’s ability to activate new and replacement facilities with sufficient staff to adequately maintain facility infrastructure.

“Today’s meeting with Secretary McDonald is yet another example of his desire to put veterans first in everything the VA does. IAVA has met with the Secretary numerous times to discuss the needs of our members and his transparency has been unprecedented,” said IAVA Political Director Bill Rausch, who was present at today’s meeting and represents IAVA in the TMC. “Today we stand with our trusted partners demanding that Congress fully fund the VA and avoid balancing the budget on the backs of veterans.”

On April 28, 2015, IAVA sent a [letter](#) to Speaker Boehner expressing concern over the lower funding level as passed by the House Appropriations Committee.

The Military Coalition is a group of 32 military, veterans and uniformed services organizations, which includes:

- Air Force Association (AFA)
- Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)
- Air Force Women Officers Associated (AFWOA)
- AMVETS (American Veterans)

Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA)
AMSUS, the Society of Federal Health Professionals
Association of the United States Army (AUSA)
Association of the United States Navy (AUSN)
Commissioned Officers Association (COA) of the United States Public Health
Service, Inc.
CWOA, US Coast Guard
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS)
Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)
Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV)
Marine Corps League (MCL)
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA)
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America (MCA)
Military Officers Association of America(MOAA)
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS)
National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS)
National Military Family Association (NMFA)
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA)
Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA)
Reserve Officers Association (ROA)
The Retired Enlisted Association(TREA)
United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)
USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)
Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)