

[Trump Signature on VA Appeals Bill Applauded by Veterans](#)

NEW YORK, NY (August 23, 2017) – Today, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the leading voice of the Post-9/11 generation of veterans, applauded the President's signing of the VA Appeals Modernization Act of 2017 (H.R. 2288) into law. This long awaited improvement to the appeals system will make the process more efficient and help prevent a VA claims backlog, which for years forced veterans to delay critical health care or pay for care themselves, causing financial distress. IAVA led the fight to end the VA backlog, and is proud that the new law incorporates many of the policy recommendations laid out in IAVA's annual [Policy Agenda](#).

"Nearly three years ago, the scandal in Phoenix alerted the country to the outrageous state of the VA health care system, including a significant backlog in claims that forced veterans to choose between timely healthcare and financial ruin," **said Allison Jaslow, Executive Director of IAVA**. "IAVA launched the campaign to end the VA backlog, and since then the VA has worked diligently to modernize the disability compensation process. But the appeals system is woefully lagging and has stalled progress with reducing the backlog. This new law makes critical improvements to the appeals process and, we hope, helps veterans avoid paying out of pocket for treatment of their war injuries in the future."

IAVA [testified](#) in favor of this bill before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee earlier this year, and has been a forceful [advocate](#) on ending the VA backlog since 2014. The culmination of years of work, the new law streamlines options for veterans to appeal benefits decisions by VA. Veterans will also have more opportunities to appeal claims they believe were wrong. Importantly, the law will ensure that VA provides more timely notification to veterans about the status of their appeals, so that veterans don't have to endure the emotional and financial stress involved in not knowing if and when they will get the healthcare they need.

"Men and women have faced significant financial and emotional stress while waiting for their appeals, and we are grateful for members of Congress and the President for pushing forward substantial reform for the appeals system," **continued Jaslow**. "This is the fourth IAVA policy priority to become law in the last month, ending IAVA's most productive summer ever. Washington may be stalled, but veterans and our allies have been uniquely able to make progress and actually get things done. We applaud bipartisan leaders in Congress and the President for continuing to prioritize veterans needs."

For more information on IAVA's advocacy work on behalf of veterans, please see the [2017 IAVA Policy Agenda](#).