

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate

September 16, 2022

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader McConnell,

In the United States, there is broad bipartisan agreement that no man or woman who has sacrificed for and served our country should struggle to meet their basic needs. Despite this, there are almost 40,000 veterans experiencing homelessness on any given night. As you consider remaining legislation in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, we urge you to pass into law the *Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness Act of 2021* (S. 2172) to move towards ending veteran homelessness once and for all. The bill would preserve and enhance proven effective COVID-19-related program improvements from both the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act* or CARES Act (P.L. 116-136) and the *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020* (P.L. 116-315), and would strengthen programs that emphasize permanent solutions to housing instability and homelessness experienced by veterans across the country.

Since 2009, the United States has cut the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in half; we know what works and what more is needed to cross the finish line. The provisions in S. 2172 are critical - they would allow Veterans Service Organizations to assist veterans in finding permanent solutions to housing insecurity and homelessness, would allow the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide adequate training and technical assistance for its homeless programs, and would enhance veterans' access to case management services to connect them with the benefits and resources they've earned. It would also recognize the impact of the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) in connecting veterans with long-term, meaningful jobs.

S. 2172 makes necessary program adjustments to better accommodate homeless veterans with difficulties accessing services, as requested by both VA and service providers. It would expand public transportation for veterans to access care, provide stable housing, and deliver appropriate medical care for aging veterans while they await long-term care placement. Emphasizing continuous improvement and a proactive response to a specific need professed by VA's Secretary, the bill includes an assessment of remaining barriers to securing permanent housing and longer-term program reporting to refine veteran housing outcomes.

Without the provisions in S. 2172, the maximum reimbursement rate for VA grantees for shelter, clinical services, and essential sustenance for veterans will drop from \$156.69 to \$60.06 a day. The increased financial burden of prioritizing COVID safety measures paired with ongoing operating and maintenance costs makes these programs unsustainable at this level and may leave grantees with no option but to discontinue providing these essential services altogether.

Further, the bill would reduce the burden on funding for the renovation of aging properties providing shelter for all veterans experiencing homelessness, thus providing organizations nationwide with the funding and flexibility to provide adequate services to unhoused veterans. Every veteran deserves access to safe shelter and housing, whether they are currently experiencing homelessness or are facing housing-associated costs that put them at risk of homelessness.

This legislation is a testament to the dedication and challenging work of communities nationwide, and the responsiveness and bipartisanship of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs, its Members, and their dedicated staff. We are committed to working with Congress and our partners across the country to end homelessness among veterans, and the passage of S. 2172 will be crucial in this endeavor. Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Air Force Sergeants Association  
American Red Cross  
Armed Services Arts Partnership (ASAP)  
Armed Services YMCA  
Association of Military Banks of America  
The Barry Robinson Center  
Blinded Veterans Association  
Blue Star Families  
Boston Veterans' Services  
Code of Support  
Cohen Veterans Network  
Combined Arms  
Community Solutions  
D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families  
Disabled American Veterans  
Dixon Center for Military and Veterans Services  
Dr. Saralyn Mark on behalf of SolaMed Solutions, LLC.  
Easterseals DC MD VA Military & Veterans Services  
Easterseals Inc.  
Elizabeth Dole Foundation  
The Enlisted Association  
Exceptional Families of the Military  
Fleet Reserve Association  
The Headstrong Project

The Independence Fund  
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America  
Jewish War Veterans  
Marine Corps Reserve Association  
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger  
Military Chaplains Association  
Military Child Education Coalition  
Military Family Advisory Network  
Military Officers Association of America  
Military Order of the Purple Heart  
Military Spouse Advocacy Network  
Minority Veterans of America  
Modern Military Association of America  
Military Women's Memorial (aka Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation)  
National Coalition for Homeless Veterans  
National Military Family Association (NMFA)  
Nation's Finest  
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association  
The Non Commissioned Officers Association  
Partners in PROMISE  
Psycharmor  
Psych Hub  
RallyPoint  
Semper Fi & America's Fund  
Service Women's Action Network  
Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors  
Travis Manion Foundation  
U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association  
Veterans for Common Sense  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
VetsFirst/United Spinal Association  
Vets' Community Connections  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
wear blue: run to remember  
Wounded Warrior Project