

VFW National Commander Addresses SXSW Boycott over US Army Sponsorship

U.S. Army was among 'Super Sponsors' of the 2024 festival

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. – VFW National Commander Duane Sarmiento issued the following statement in response to 80 artists — many from international locations — pulling out of this year's South by Southwest (SXSW) festival in Austin, Texas, because the U.S. Army was a “Super Sponsor” of the event.

“The VFW fully supports free speech but seems the artists who pulled out of this year's South by Southwest festival due to the U.S. Army's sponsorship missed out on a great opportunity for needed exposure. They seem to have forgotten it's the good men and women of the U.S. Army who fought and died for their opportunity to perform in the U.S., or not. Their decision will have lasting impacts on their careers, and if free speech enthusiasts like Horse Jumper of Love, Squirrel Flower, Lip Critic or any other artist who cancelled their appearance in Austin again get the opportunity to come to our great nation, we invite them to visit with some of our Army veterans to gain some insight into the positive world impacts they're responsible for.”

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