

VFW Prepares to Deliver 2025 Legislative Priorities to Lawmakers

National leaders, members primed to urge elected leaders to Honor the Contract

Feb 27, 2025

WASHINGTON — Per tradition, close to a thousand members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and its Auxiliary will flock to Washington, D.C., this weekend for VFW's 2025 Washington Conference, which will run from March 2 - 6. Held every year, the national mid-winter conference encompasses the VFW's largest legislative advocacy event, VFW business sessions and much more. The conference will be attended by elected and appointed leaders and delegates from across the VFW and its Auxiliary including members from Europe and the Pacific Areas.

"The might of the VFW lies in its members and nowhere is that more on public display than in Washington, D.C., every March," said VFW National Commander Al Lipphardt. "It is a spectacular sight to see hundreds of VFW members proudly wearing their caps as they walk the halls of Congress exercising their right to advocate for themselves and their comrades."

The VFW's 78th annual Voice of Democracy Parade of Winners, which is sponsored by Twisted X, will also take place during Washington Conference. Established shortly after World War II, the Voice of Democracy program challenges more than 26,000 high school students from across the country each year to craft democratic and patriotic-themed essays to win a portion of more than \$1.4 million in educational scholarships and incentives. A \$35,000 scholarship awaits the national competition's first place winner and is paid directly to the American university, college or vocational/technical school of their choice.

"Today's youth are the future of our beloved nation," Lipphardt said. "Inspiring within young people pride, patriotism and a sense of ownership in our democracy today means having an engaged populous tomorrow — one that understands both the strength and fragility of what our Founding Fathers bestowed upon us and charged us with preserving. I look forward to meeting each Department winner and congratulating them on their exceptional responses to this year's essay theme, 'Is America Today Our Forefathers'."

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Vision?”

One of the final events of the Washington Conference is the annual commander-in-chief's testimony set for March 4 at 10 a.m. (EST) before a special joint hearing of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs held at the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

“Service to and advocacy for our brothers and sisters-in-arms is at the heart of who we are at VFW, and I could not be more honored and humbled to lead from the front and carry our message to Congress,” Lipphardt said. “This year, we have a new Congress and new administration, and we will be heard. Some of these issues have long gone unresolved by our elected and appointed officials, which is unacceptable. Make no mistake — the VFW will not stop pounding the drum on what veterans need and care about, to include the federal government's inalienable responsibility to deliver on its promises. Members of Congress can count on us to “March Forth” with hats in their halls and offices until our concerns are rectified and they **Honor the Contract.**”

Lipphardt is poised to discuss the VFW's top legislative priorities for 2025 including:

- Unresolved Toxic Exposures
- Alternative PTSD Treatments
- Military Transition
- Claim Sharks
- GI Bill Parity
- Concurrent Receipt (Disability compensation and retirement pay offset)

Washington Conference also marks the culmination of the 11th annual VFW-Student Veterans of America (SVA) Legislative Fellowship. Six fellows will join VFW advocates on Capitol Hill as they meet with lawmakers and staff to discuss Post-9/11 GI Bill eligibility parity between active and reserve component service members. Last year, the VFW-grown and supported Not Just a Number Act was made law via the passage of the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, also known as the Dole Act, in large part due to the unified advocacy of VFW members and VFW-SVA fellows.

Read the VFW's complete list of 2025 Priority Goals approved by VFW members [here](#).

The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs will livestream this year's testimony on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs YouTube channel [here](#). Visit the 2025 VFW Washington Conference [webpage](#) and follow us on social media for all **#VFWDC2025** Washington Conference updates.