September 11, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson The Honorable Chuck Schumer

Speaker Majority Leader

United States House of Representatives United States Senate

Washington, D.C. 20515 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries The Honorable Mitch McConnell

Minority Leader Minority Leader

United States House of Representatives United States Senate

Washington, D.C. 20515 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides monthly benefits to veterans in recognition of the effects of disabilities incurred or aggravated during active military service. VA also provides monthly payments to surviving spouses, dependent children, and dependent parents in recognition of the economic loss caused by a veteran's death during military service or, after discharge from military service, as a result of a service-connected disability. Veterans, service members, and qualified family members may also receive help with paying college tuition, finding a school or training program, and getting career counseling. Each month, millions of veterans and their family members rely on these earned benefits to make ends meet, and many could not afford to have these payments delayed even one day.

On July 15, 2024, VA officials informed Congress that the department requires an additional $2.9 billion in mandatory funding to support veterans’ pensions and benefits for the remaining months of the current fiscal year. Unless Congress approves this needed funding by September 20th, roughly seven million veterans and their beneficiaries may not receive VA disability compensation and other benefits as scheduled on October 1st.

VA also needs an extra $12 billion in order to provide medical care for veterans and support their caregivers in fiscal year 2025. This is on top of what has already been provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024,(P.L. 118-47) earlier this year,or projected allocationsin the House and Senate’s fiscal year 2025 Military Construction-VA bills.

Although we support efforts to ensure accountability for the use of VA funds, these shortfalls are not the fault of our veterans and their families who have given so much to our country. They must not be asked to bear further burdens such as delayed benefits and inadequate medical care due to funding challenges. We urge Congress to act swiftly to approve the necessary funding so there is no gap in either benefits or needed health care.

Cc: House and Senate Appropriations and Veterans Affairs Committees

Paralyzed Veterans of America Disabled American Veterans

Veterans of Foreign Wars The American Legion

Military Officers Association of America Wounded Warrior Project

Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors Independence Fund

Blinded Veterans Association Fleet Reserve Association

Student Veterans of America Air Force Sergeants Association

Quality of Life Foundation America’s Warrior Partnership

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America Jewish War Veterans of the USA

The Elizabeth Dole Foundation Vietnam Veterans of America

Military Order of the Purple Heart I AM ALS