
(May 23, 2007) Rep. Dan Lipinski is First Member of Congress to Affirm the Veterans' Bill of Rights

Rep. Dan Lipinski is First Member of Congress to Affirm the Veterans' Bill of Rights

Falls Church, VA 22046

May 23 2007

<http://www.expertclick.com/NewsReleaseWire/default.cfm?Action=ReleaseDetail&ID=16600>

Falls Church, Virginia - A national, veterans rights advocacy group announced today that Congressman Dan Lipinski, of Illinois' 3rd Congressional District, is the first Member of Congress to affirm his support for the Veterans' Bill of Rights sponsored by the Circle of Friends for American Veterans.

The Veterans' Bill of Rights would require that every Veterans' Administration Medical Center in the country offer Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) counseling, increase the funding provided to non-profit transitional facilities that get homeless veterans off the street and make veterans the top priority for Members of Congress. The Circle of Friends has asked that every member of Congress endorse their Veterans' Bill of Rights.

Maj. Brian Hampton, President of the Circle of Friends for American Veterans, explaining the urgency of the Veterans' Bill of Rights said, "A virtual majority of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans exhibit symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. We know from our experiences with Vietnam Veterans that PTSD can lead to substance abuse, severe mental health illnesses and homelessness."

Hampton continued, "Sadly, only about half of the VA Medical Centers offer this necessary counseling and six out of seven surveyed by the Government Accountability Office determined they could not handle their existing caseload."

Congressman Lipinski is a member of three House committees: Transportation & Infrastructure, Science & Technology and Small Business. Although only in his second term in office, Congress Lipinski has already demonstrated a firm

commitment to the 25 million living veterans who have served this nation in uniform.

The Congressman has stated previously that he, "strongly believes that as a nation we have an obligation to prioritize the veteran healthcare system, ensure [veterans] access to educational opportunities and home loan programs." The Congressman also supports "Operation Hero Miles," a program that encourages the donation of unused frequent flyer miles from individuals to help troops stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan fly home for free when on leave.

In Illinois' 3rd district, Congressman Lipinski is working to end the disabled veterans' tax, ensure that all veterans have continued and improved access to VA healthcare facilities, and assisting 3rd district veterans with receiving access to support services to which they are entitled.

The Circle of Friends will continue to pursue other Members of Congress regarding the Veterans' Bill of Rights. President Brian Hampton explained that the organization will announce those Members who endorse, and especially those who do not endorse, the Veterans' Bill of Rights in media interviews, in press releases, in the VETERANS' VISION (the allied publication of the group) and in national rallies in support of American Veterans that will be held around the country.

Hampton declared that the organization would, "Put the politicians feet to the fire so that they might see the light!"

The Circle of Friends for American Veterans, established in 1993, is a non-profit organization dedicated to influencing public opinion and affecting public policy in support of American Veterans, especially homeless veterans. As part of their mission, The Circle of Friends provides conducts nationwide rallies, holding forums with policymakers and providing material support to transitional facilities that assist homeless veterans.