



Congressman
JERRY MORAN

*Representing the First District of Kansas
United States House of Representatives*

Dear Veteran,

As a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, I want to report to you on action taken during the last session of Congress.

The federal government must keep the promises made to veterans. Veterans have engaged in one of the noblest forms of public service – defending this nation. America’s veterans risked their health, security, and in many cases, their lives for this great country. As Americans, we must honor and assist these dedicated men and women who served our nation.

Communities throughout the First District are home to thousands of veterans. It is an honor that so many veterans call Kansas home.

Congress has acted on numerous initiatives to improve the benefits and services available to our nation’s veterans. Legislation has been passed to provide funding increases and expansion of veterans health care programs, medical facility construction, cost-of-living increases, and claims assistance, as well as an update to the Montgomery GI Bill.

Please take a moment to review the information included in this newsletter. If you have questions, concerns or suggestions, please let me know.

Very truly yours,

Jerry



Congressman Moran officially presents World War II service medals to Cliff Stadig at his home in Dodge City.

(Photo courtesy of the Dodge City Daily Globe)

Congress Strengthens Health Care Programs for Veterans

Funding Increases – This year, VA health care spending increased by \$1.36 billion, to \$20.3 billion. Over the last five years, Congress provided \$93 billion for VA health care, the most ever during any five-year period, and \$16.3 billion more than the previous five years.

Long Term Care – The Veterans’ Millennium Health Care Benefits Act was signed into law in November, 1999. This bill requires the VA to operate and maintain extended care programs including, VA and community-based nursing home care, domiciliary care, adult day health care, respite care, and alternatives to institutional care. This legislation also establishes a national level of long-term care services and a co-payment policy for non-disabled veterans with income above the pension level. In addition, \$100 million for grants to states to provide long-term care facilities for veterans is included in the legislation.

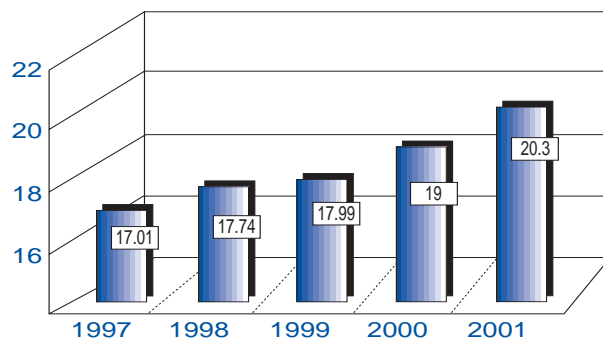
Emergency Care – The Veterans’ Millennium Health Care Benefits Act also requires VA payment for emergency services provided to veterans who do not have other insurance.

OTHER LEGISLATION PENDING

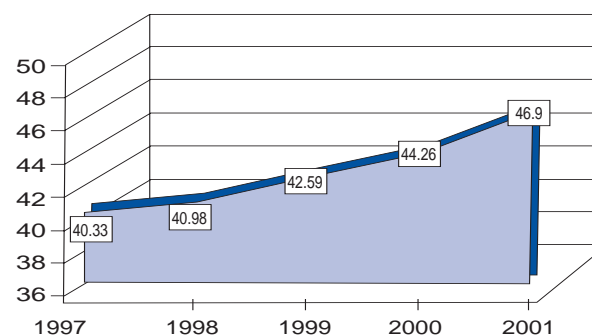
Claims Assistance – The House approved the Veterans Claims Assistance Act. This legislation would increase VA’s obligations to help veterans at the initial claims stage, provide the long-awaited assistance to veterans seeking benefits and protect veterans who could find themselves unable to proceed with their claims. In addition, an extra \$73 million has been approved for the Veterans Benefits Administration to expedite claims processing. The current average claim-processing time is three years.

Access – Many Kansans experience difficulty or long waiting periods to get an appointment with VA medical centers. This year, the House passed the Veterans Health Care Personnel Act to increase recruitment and retention of quality VA health professionals. Through these efforts, more VA health professionals could be employed, and veterans should receive better access to quality care.

Federal Spending on All VA Medical Care
in billions



Federal Spending on All VA Programs
in billions



Moran Calls for More Veteran Services in North Central Kansas

This past spring, Congressman Moran held a health care forum to assess the needs of Kansas veterans. Following the forum, Moran requested the establishment of a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in north central Kansas. As a result, the Veterans Administration (VA) held a public meeting in Salina this summer to discuss the possibility of establishing a CBOC for the area.

As a member of the House of Representatives Veterans’ Affairs Committee, Moran has been a proponent for the establishment of CBOC locations in Kansas. In the past two years, veterans have seen two CBOCs established – Hays in 1998 and Ft. Dodge in 1999.

Under the CBOC program, the VA would contract primary health care services from an area medical provider, bringing much-needed VA health care services closer to Kansas veterans.



Representatives of the Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars visit Congressman Moran in Washington D.C.

Front Row: Richard Clutts, Lewie Cooper, Tom Sanko, Darrell Bencken, Ronald Ryburn, Charles Shoemaker, Norman Staab.

Back Row: Kenneth Wescott, Leon Shaw, Jeff Lawson, Lynn Hall, Congressman Moran, Dick Weston.

Veterans Education Funding Improved

This year, Congressman Moran supported the Veterans and Dependents Millennium Education Act, which passed as part of a five year, \$1.4 billion commitment to improving veterans education benefits. This legislation increases the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) monthly education benefit to \$650 as part of a nearly 50 percent increase since 1997. A full-time student at a four-year institution is eligible for an educational benefit of \$23,400, while a service member opting to contribute additional amounts can receive up to \$800 per month for a total benefit of up to \$28,800. This bill also provides active duty service members with a new opportunity to convert their Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) benefits to the MGIB if they declined to do so before or withdrew all funds from their VEAP accounts. Finally, this legislation increases the Survivors and Dependents Education Assistance Program for widows and children of deceased or totally disabled veterans to \$588 per month.

Akers Serves as Guest Chaplain



Rev. James Akers of Madison, Chaplain for the Kansas American Legion, gave the opening prayer before the U.S. House of Representatives at the start of their business day on September 7th. Rev. Akers was a guest of Congressman Moran. Here, Rev. Akers is presented with a certificate by Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert and House Chaplain Daniel Coughlin.

Moran Supports Veterans COLA Increase

Congressman Jerry Moran supported two cost-of-living increases for veterans in the 106th Congress. Last year, the House passed the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Act of 1999, providing a 2.4% COLA in rates of compensation paid for service-connected disabilities and for dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of such veterans. This bill was signed into law by the President in November, 1999. In October, 2000, Congressman Moran supported a 3.5% COLA, effective December 1, 2000. These increases match the COLA granted to Social Security recipients.

Moran Honors Korean War Veterans at Memorial Day Services



Over 1,000 veterans and their families came to Abilene this past Memorial Day to join Congressman Moran in honoring veterans of the Korean War. The Memorial Day ceremonies were held at the Eisenhower Center in Abilene.

To the left, Congressman Moran recognizes Ray Lange of Mankato, for his service in the Korean War.

On the right, Congressman Moran delivers remarks during the ceremonies. 2000 marks the 50th anniversary of the Korean War, fought from June 25, 1950 through July 27, 1953.

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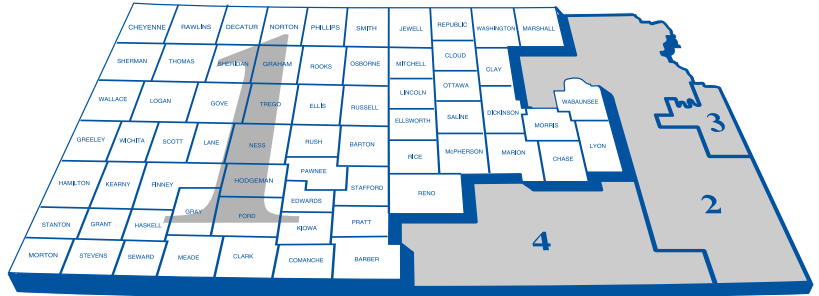
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Representing the 1st District of Kansas

Jerry Moran

M.C.
BULK RATE

This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.

VETERANS NEWS FROM CONGRESSMAN MORAN

Read the latest congressional updates on:

- Increase in Veterans Health Care Funding
- New Community-Based Outpatient Clinics
- Veterans Education Opportunities
- Cost-of-Living Adjustment Increases



Congressman Moran meets with former Commander of the Kansas State Department of Disabled Veterans, Aaron A. Bura, of Emporia, in Washington D.C., to discuss veterans' issues.