

Eighth District Veterans Report

★ *From U.S. Representative Bill Posey* ★

Dear Friend,

As we observe Veterans Day let us take some time to reflect on the service and great personal sacrifices made by our brave men and women in uniform over the years to protect and defend this great nation.

For nearly 250 years, adversaries and foreign powers have sought to extinguish the torch of liberty, yet, because of the courage and dedication of our servicemembers and their families, America has stood strong, as a shining light on the hill and a hope for the world. We owe them, and their families, a great debt of gratitude today, and every day.

One of the greatest honors that my staff and I have is assisting those who have served in our Armed Forces, helping the loved one of a fallen soldier, a veteran in need or a family member. If you know of any veteran in our community who is having trouble with VA services, please reach out to them and encourage them to contact my office at 321-632-1776 (727-226-1701 for Indian River County). My staff and I are here to serve you.



Congressman Posey discusses religious freedom and military issues with Marine Corps Veteran Danny Garcia and his wife Lt. Col. Jackie Garcia (USAF Ret.).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill".

Afghanistan & Iraq War Veterans: Our military veterans and their families deserve our gratitude for their service and sacrifices. The VA established a hotline to assist veterans in crisis. If you are a veteran in need of assistance, or you know a veteran who needs help, you can encourage them to call the crisis hotline **1-800-273-8255, press 1, or text 838255.**

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Congressman Posey's Legislative Agenda for Veterans



Increased Economic Opportunities for Veterans:

- ✓ **Improving the GI Bill** – Cosponsored the *Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act*, which removed time restrictions enabling future eligible recipients to use their GI bill benefits for their entire lives. (*Public Law 115-48*)
- ✓ **Veterans Employment** – Selected by U.S. House of Representatives to participate in the Wounded Warrior employee program to hire a post-9/11 wounded warrior.
- ✓ **Transitioning from Military Jobs to Civilian Jobs** – Supported H.R. 2494 to establish the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

Meeting Critical Medical Needs of Veterans:

- ✓ **Combating Veterans Suicide** – Supported legislation (H.R. 4173) to require the VA to conduct a study on the outcomes and efficacy of the Veterans Crisis Line.
- ✓ **Fighting Opioid Addiction** – Supported legislation (H.R. 3832) to require medical providers at the VA who prescribe controlled substances to coordinate with state programs that monitor prescription drug use.
- ✓ **Meeting the Needs of Surviving Spouses** – Ending the practice of reducing Survivor Benefit Program benefits by the amount received in Dependence and Indemnity Compensation. (Cosponsored H.R. 846)
- ✓ **Increasing Access to Service Animals** – Cosponsored the *Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act and Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers Act or PAWS Act*.

Improving the VA Experience and Protecting Veterans' Rights:

- ✓ **Modernizing the Veterans Appeals Process** – Supported the *Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act*, which modernizes the appeals process at the Department of Veterans Affairs to allow for faster appeals decisions for veterans. (*Public Law 115-55*)
- ✓ **VA Accountability** – Supported the *VA Accountability First Act*, which gives the VA Secretary increased flexibility to fire, demote, or suspend any VA employee for performance issues or misconduct.
- ✓ **VA ID Card** – Cosponsored legislation signed into law enabling veterans to obtain identification cards from the Department of Veterans Affairs. (*Public Law 114-31*)
- ✓ **Protecting 2nd Amendment Rights** – Supported H.R. 1181, *The Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act* to ensure that no veteran who utilizes a fiduciary will lose their Second Amendment rights without due process.



Congressman Posey delivers a keynote address and discusses our Space Program with students at the Air Force's Air University.

Stopping Destructive Critical Race Theory

- ✓ **Cosponsored a defense authorization amendment to ban critical race theory (CRT) in the military**
- ✓ **Cosponsored the *Stop CRT Act* (H.R. 3179) to codify President Trump's Executive Order banning CRT from being used in federal agency trainings**
- ✓ **Cosponsored the *Combatting Racist Training in the U.S. Military Act* to prohibit our military from promoting CRT**
- ✓ **Stopping CRT in K-12 schools (H. Res. 397)**

Posey Defense Initiatives Clear House

- ✓ **Blocking funding for military/intelligence cooperation with the Taliban**
- ✓ **Requiring quarterly briefings in threats emanating from Afghanistan**
- ✓ **Requiring DoD briefing on status of women and girls in Afghanistan**
- ✓ **Requiring domestically sourced, fully traceable, bovine heparin for medications**
- ✓ **DoD training on health effects of PFAS chemicals**
- ✓ **Domestic production of semiconductors**
- ✓ **Advancing U.S. production of computer chips**

Read more about my record at www.posey.house.gov

Supporting Our Troops and Securing Our Nation is a Top Priority

Posey's Amendment to Confront China's Subversion of International Standards Advances

The House Science Committee adopted Congressman Posey's amendment to stop China from gaming the system by co-opting and subverting international standards-setting bodies and placing the U.S. at a disadvantage. Posey's amendment maintains U.S. participation in international standards-setting bodies where appropriate, while providing guidance to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) regarding how those bodies it participates in should operate with respect to Chinese participation. Posey said that the foundation of all our work with international partners must include fairness for American companies.



Congressman Posey talks space issues with employees at the Lockheed Martin Star Center in Titusville.

Accountability for the Afghanistan Withdrawal

The 20th anniversary of September 11th, sadly, came on the heels of the disastrous withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. We lost 13 brave servicemembers because of poor decisions that left them vulnerable. In addition to Americans left behind, thousands of Afghan allies have been left to the whims of the Taliban. And, tens of billions of dollars of American military equipment was handed over as an arsenal, making the Taliban one of the best-equipped militaries in the region.

Congressman Posey has joined with other Members of Congress to bring accountability to the decision makers.

- ✓ Requiring DoD Inspector General to conduct an investigation into the U.S. withdrawal
- ✓ Requiring full transparency on advice or counsel provided to the President
- ✓ Condemning President Biden's failure to heed the advice of military and intelligence advisors about the Taliban that led to a disorganized, chaotic, and abrupt evacuation of the U.S. and its Afghan allies (H.Res. 607)
- ✓ Voted for and funded Special Visas for screened Afghan Allies who assisted U.S. Forces (PL 117-31)
- ✓ **Cosponsored the *Afghanistan Withdrawal and Oversight Liability (AWOL) Act***

Fighting for Relief for Veterans Exposed to Toxic Substances

Congressman Posey has worked to extend healthcare and other veterans benefits to servicemembers who suffered exposures to harmful or toxic substances like agent orange and toxic releases from burn pits. In this Congress, Posey has cosponsored:

- ✓ The ***K2 Veterans Care Act*** which establishes a presumption of service-connection for certain diseases related to active duty at K2 Air Base in Uzbekistan
- ✓ The ***Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Act*** which allows veterans exposed to toxic substances in military to enroll in the VA healthcare system, create a process for the VA to establish a presumption of service connection for benefits, and advance scientific research into toxic exposure

Protecting Military Communities from Forever Chemicals Like PFAS

We owe our military members, their families, and the communities that host them on bases protection and remediation of the effects of these harmful forever chemicals.

- ✓ Original cosponsor of the ***PFAS Action Act (H.R. 2467)*** directing the EPA to designate PFAS a hazardous substance
- ✓ Passed amendment targeting PFAS chemicals in drinking water and firefighting foam on military bases
- ✓ Original cosponsor of the ***PFAS Free Military Purchasing Act (H.R. 4975)***



Congressman Posey tours L3Harris Headquarters and talks defense issues with CEO Chris Kubasik.

Ending the Veterans Benefit Backlog

Congress approved additional funding so the National Personnel Records Center at the National Archives could operate and continue to fulfill requests to meet the needs of our veterans. Congressman Posey recently called on the National Archives to serve our veterans. Posey recently supported efforts to increase the capacity of the National Archives and resolve the unacceptable pandemic-related backlog.

"Because of the courage and dedication of our servicemembers and their families, America has stood strong." - Congressman Posey

Paid for by official funds authorized by the House of Representatives.

Fixing Pay and Retired Pay Disparities

Congressman Posey has been supportive of legislation to provide many of our veterans with the disability benefits they earned and retired military pensions. Addressing any disparities and making things fairer is important:

- ✓ Cosponsored the **Major Richard Star Act** which allows combat-disabled uniformed services retirees with fewer than 20 years of service to concurrently receive, without reduction, veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation.
- ✓ Cosponsored the **Retired Pay Restoration Act** which allows combat-disabled veterans to receive both military retired pay and veterans' disability compensation with respect to any service-connected disability.

Need Help with the VA or a Federal Government Agency?

If you experience a problem dealing with a federal agency such as the VA, Social Security, Medicare, the IRS, or any other agency, Rep. Posey and his staff stand ready to assist you.

Our office can also help in obtaining U.S. flags flown over the Capitol building, providing passes/tours of the Capitol and other information for Washington, D.C. visits, assisting eligible grant seekers in finding information on federal grants, making nominations to military academies, and with college students looking for internship opportunities in our Florida and Washington offices. If you need assistance, please feel free to contact our local office at 321-632-1776. We're here to serve you.



Congressman Posey talks veterans' health care issues at the opening of the new veterans clinic in Palm Bay.



Thank You for Your Service

Gratefully acknowledging Lt. General Bill Welser (USAF Ret.) for serving on our District 8 United States Air Force Academy Nominating Committee from 2013-2020.

Lt. General Welser and his wife Sue Welser have long served our community, and our local veterans, spearheading for many years the Space Coast Honor Flight.

"I am pleased to inform you that with the assistance of your office, my mother was finally approved by the Veterans Administration for Aid and Attendance. After over a year, our family will finally be receiving assistance with payments to the assisted living facility. Your interference on her behalf is greatly appreciated."

- Vero Beach Constituent

"This letter states my request for 'Correction of Military Records' regarding my brother's permanent back disability, succeeded in changing the determination to be in the line of duty. Now my 65-year-old brother will soon be eligible to receive medical care for his debilitating back injury from the Veterans Administration, which has been long overdue since the injury occurred four decades ago."

- Cocoa Beach Constituent