



CONGRESSMAN TIM WALZ

FIGHTING FOR MINNESOTA'S VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES

Because of the incredible sacrifice America's military families and veterans make on behalf of their country, they in return deserve the very best from our government. As ranking member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Congressman Walz is honored to fight for them, every day he serves in Congress.

BRINGING CLOSURE TO MILITARY FAMILIES LONGSTANDING SUFFERING

Congressman Walz offered his full support to Congressman Johnson (R-TX) Calling on the Department of Defense, other elements of the Federal Government, and foreign governments to intensify efforts to investigate, recover, and identify all missing and unaccounted-for personnel of the United States (H. Res. 129). Rep Walz serves as commissioner on the U.S. Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs and understands the morale obligation to servicemembers and military families alike.

BALANCING THE ADVICE TO THE PRESIDENT ON MATTERS OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Congressman Walz and Congressman Larsen (D-WA) introduced Ensuring Sound Military and Intelligence Advice Act of 2017 (H.R. 793) to ensure the National Security Council offers the President advice and wisdom from regular attendees which include the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Director of National Intelligence if also receiving advice from primarily political individuals who attend regular meetings of the Council. *Referred to the Armed Services; Foreign Affairs; and Intelligence Committee, awaiting action.*

ENSURING THE VA HAS ITS RESOURCES TO KEEP ITS PROMISES AND FULFILL ITS MISSION

Congressman Walz offered his full support to Congressman Schrader (D-OR) To prohibit any hiring freeze from affecting the Department of Veterans Affairs (H.R. 696). Presidential Memorandum from January 23, 2017 freezes all federal hiring except for military personnel, national security or public safety. This leaves thousands of positions in the VA vacant, reducing access, adding to wait times and benefits backlogs. *Referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, awaiting action.*

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR OUR VETERANS EXPOSED TO ATOMIC RADIATION IN MARSHALL ISLANDS

Congressman Walz offered his full support to Congressman Meng's (D-NY) Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act (H.R. 632) which would provide presumption of service connection for radiation exposed veterans who participated in the cleanup of Enewatak Atoll from January 1977 until December 1980. Their mission was to relocate radioactive fallout at the Nuclear Test Site and make the area safe from radioactivity. *Referred to VA Subcommittee, awaiting action.*

REDUCING THE REASSIGNMENT BURDEN FOR CERTIFIED AND LICENSED MILITARY SPOUSES

Congressman Walz and Congressman Cartwright (D-PA) introduced Military Spouse Job Continuity Act of 2017 (H.R. 488) to amend the IRS code, allowing a tax credit against income tax for military spouses who require a new state license or certification because of a military permanent change of station. This will offer up to \$500 for qualified relicensing costs of former state professions. *Referred to Committee on Ways and Means, awaiting action.*

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HONORING THE FAMILY HISTORY AND MILITARY SERVICE OF DISTANT RELATIVES

Congressman Walz offered his full support to Congressman Kind's (R-WI) Honoring our Heroes Act (H.R. 406) which would allow the defense department to present replacement decorations or awards (other than the medal of honor) to relatives to the fourth degree when not the next of kin of the deceased recipient. *Referred to the Armed Services Committee, awaiting action.*

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR OUR NAVY VETERANS EXPOSED TO AGENT ORANGE

Congressman Walz and Congressman Valadao (R-CA) introduced Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017 (H.R. 299). This legislation clarifies presumptions related to veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam by including its territorial seas for the VA's service connection to Agent Orange. This is long overdue and the right thing for our Vietnam Veterans who are suffering with Agent Orange but not service connected simply because they did not have boots on the ground. *Referred to VA Subcommittee, awaiting action.*

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH ACCESS FOR SINGLE PARENTS

Congressman Walz and Congresswoman Brownley (D-CA) introduced Veterans' Access to Child Care Act (H.R. 95) providing childcare assistance to eligible veterans receiving mental health, intensive mental health and other intensive services that the VA determines would improve the veteran's access but because they are primary caretakers of a child. *Referred to VA Subcommittee, awaiting action.*

PROTECTING CHILDREN OF VETERANS WHO GAVE UP SO MUCH FOR OUR COUNTRY

Congressman Walz and Congresswoman Brownley (D-CA) introduced CHAMPVA Children's Protection Act of 2017 (H.R. 92) allowing children of veterans eligible for medical care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) to continue coverage up to age 26. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PL 111-148) left a coverage gap for children of eligible veterans from 23 to 26 years of age. Public Law (PL 111-383) allows TRICARE to cover children on their parents' plan up to age 26. *Referred to VA Subcommittee, awaiting action.*

MILITARY SERVICE AS A PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP

Congressman Walz and Congressman Denham (R-CA) introduced Encourage New Legalized Immigrants to Start Training Act or the ENLIST Act (H.R. 60) allowing unlawfully present aliens in the United States, younger than age 15 on December 31, 2012 and otherwise eligible to enlist on active duty a pathway to citizenship contingent upon completion of military service under honorable conditions. *Referred to Armed Services Committee, awaiting action.*

HONORING MILITARY RETIREES AND FIGHTING TO GET THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVE

Congressman Walz introduced the Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act (H.R. 1384) which would grant full "veteran" status to members of the Guard and Reserve components who served at least 20 years but have not been called up for federal active duty. This recognition does not entitle members additional benefits or change their earned benefits; it simply adds their service to the "veteran" definition. *Language included in Jeff Miller and Richard Blumenthal Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2016 (H.R. 6416, Section 305) Signed into law (PL 114-315) on December 16, 2016.*

ENSURING OUR VETERANS RECEIVE THE MENTAL HEALTH CARE THEY NEED AND DESERVE

Congressman Walz introduced the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act (H.R. 203) to help our veterans combat the war at home for those contemplating suicide. Many veterans and family members continue to struggle with behavioral health challenges, a dissociative sense of belonging and untimely or unavailable medical care. This bill will help our nation with the ability to turn the tide against this growing epidemic. *Signed into law (PL 114-2) on February 12, 2015.*

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FIGHTING FOR THOSE IMPROPERLY DISCHARGED BY DOD WITH FALSE PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

Congressman Walz introduced The Servicemembers Mental Health Review Act (H.R. 975) to force DoD to review and correct improper personality disorder discharges for over 31,000 veterans and ensure those suffering from PTSD get the mental health care they need and benefits they have earned. This legislation gives the Physical Disability Board of Review the authority to correct service records and make things right. *Partial inclusion NDAA FY-2015 Subtitle C, Sec. 521 (H.R. 3979). Signed into law (PL 113-291) on December 19, 2014.*

INCREASING VETERANS ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Congressman Walz served on the Conference Committee to work through the differences between the Senate (S.2450) and House (H.R. 3230) versions of Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014. In the wake of the VA scandal involving falsified appointment records that hid long wait times, the agreement increases veterans' access to health care, promotes greater accountability, increases capacity by approving 27 new VA Health Facilities, and expedites the hiring of more doctors and nurses. *Signed into law (PL 113-146) on August 7, 2014.*

RIGHTING A WRONG DONE TO MILITARY RETIREES

Congressman Walz and Congressman Maffei (D-NY) introduced the Military Retirement Restoration Act (H.R. 3793), which repeals the onerous cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) cuts for military retirees under age 62 that was included in the budget agreement and originally proposed by House Budget Chairman Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI). Congressman Walz opposed this provision from the beginning and has vowed to work with anyone to replace it by finding cuts elsewhere. *Included in S. 25 and signed into law (PL 113-82) on February 15, 2014.*

HELPING THOSE WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

Congressman Walz introduced the Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitative Services' Improvements Act (H.R. 1855) ensuring the VA sets the goal of maximizing injured veterans independence and quality of life, as well as continuing to support their behavioral and mental health functions. It requires the VA evaluate a comprehensive long-term care program for our veterans with traumatic brain injuries instead of the physical care currently available. *Included in Sec 107 of H.R. 1627 and signed into law (PL 112-154) on August 6, 2012.*

STREAMLINE FEDERAL CERTIFICATION AND LICENSING FOR MILITARY SKILLS

Congressman Walz and Congressman Denham (R-CA) introduced the Veteran Skills to Jobs Act (H.R. 4155). It allows veterans to use their military skills and training towards federal jobs at home by directing the head of each agency to treat relevant military training as sufficient for federal occupational certifications or licenses. The federal government may be paying twice, once with DoD and again with educational benefits, for veterans to receive federal certificates or licenses. In many cases, military training meets or exceeds the federal requirements. *Signed into law (PL 112-147) on July 23, 2012.*

PROTECTING THE JOBS THEY ALREADY HAVE WHEN SERVICE MEMBERS DEPLOY

Congressman Walz introduced legislation (H.R. 3670) requiring the Transportation Security Agency (TSA) to comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). When initially established, TSA was exempt from USERRA laws. Today, there is no reason for the exemption and they must offer our service members who were deployed their jobs back. *Signed into law (PL 112-171) on August 16, 2012.*

FIGHTING FOR BENEFITS EARNED BY MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS

Congressman Walz, Co-Chair of the Guard and Reserve Caucus, garnered support of the full caucus and sent a letter to Secretary Panetta, asking DoD to exempt members whose mobilization and deployment occurred before a recent rule change. Post-Deployment/Mobilization Respite Absence (PDMRA) benefits service members who deploy beyond the standard DoD rules. The recent rule change, in the middle of the Minnesota Red Bulls deployment, reduces the time our soldiers can spend with their families before returning to their employers. *Additionally, he joined in support of legislation (H.R. 4045) to restore these benefits, which became law (PL 112-120) on May 25, 2012.*

CONGRESSMAN WALZ'S MEMBERSHIP IN CONGRESSIONAL MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS*

Congressional Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Caucus: Ensures EOD technicians across all branches of our military have the tools and resources to protect others by rendering safe every type of ordnance on land and at sea, as well as operating not only in theater abroad but also by partnering with civil authorities and lending their expertise to neutralize domestic threats. Congressman Walz is a Co-Chair.

Congressional National Guard and Reserve Component Caucus: Ensures our National Guard and Reserve components have adequate resources to carry out their missions overseas, defend the homeland and provide crucial support to our nation's citizens during natural disasters and national emergencies. Congressman Walz is a Co-Chair.

Special Operations Forces Caucus: is committed to advancing the needs of our country's special operations community and the issues facing armed service members who perform special operations missions. Congressman Walz is the Co-Chair

Congressional Veterans Jobs Caucus: In both the House and Senate, the caucus works to decrease the unemployment rate of the nation's veterans who are currently seeking meaningful employment. The caucus collaborates with private businesses both large and small to commit to hiring veterans. Congressman Walz is a Co-Chair.

**The term "Congressional Member Organization" refers to a group of Members who join in pursuit of common legislative objectives. CMOs exist to affect public policy, either directly through policy advocacy for a region or an issue, or indirectly by attracting media attention, or through the socialization and orientation of their Members. Nearly all CMOs serve as forums for the exchange of information.*