



Capitol Hill is buzzing. President Biden got a lot of laughs for going “Dark Brandon” at the White House Correspondence dinner.

All jokes aside, there has been a lot of buzz regarding the VA’s budget and the idea of proposed cuts. A letter was circulated regarding the overall budget, and we initially considered supporting it. After conversations with the House Veterans Affairs Committee, however, we decided to withdraw our support of the letter. You might also note that most of the large veteran groups also did not support it.

We will continue to stay vigilant to ensure that our veterans continue receiving the healthcare and benefits they deserve. We are also pleased that we finally managed to get an Under Secretary of Benefits confirmed. The timing is critical as we get to work on PACT Act benefits.

AMVETS will be testifying regarding PACT Act benefits on May 16th. We will send out additional info on that front next week. Hope to see you all soon.

With high regard,

-Paul Shipley, AMVETS National Third Vice Commander

## News Driving the Week

Last Friday, the House Veterans Affairs Committee hosted a [Full Committee Markup on Pending Legislation](#). Seven bills were [passed out of the Committee](#).

Last week, the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee also hosted a [hearing to consider pending legislation](#).

The White House released a [statement regarding GOP legislation](#) to raise the debt ceiling until May 2024 and cut \$4.5 trillion. The statement referred to the Limit, Save, Grow Act of 2023 ([H.R. 2811](#)), introduced by Rep. Jodey Arrington of Texas, as one of the largest cuts to veterans' benefits in U.S. history. This move would include the elimination of 81 thousand jobs from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Democrats are insistent that this legislation will not ward off a potential government default this summer.

Twenty-four [veterans' groups signed a letter to Congress](#) expressing "grave concerns" about the veterans' cuts before the House voted to approve the bill. House Republicans are reportedly fuming over [claims from the Department of Veterans Affairs](#) that the bill would endanger services and benefits for veterans, and they have reiterated that they [plan to continue protecting veteran benefits](#).

The archbishop of military services has penned a [scathing letter](#) following the U.S. Senate's [approval of a Department of Veterans Affairs rule](#) expanding some abortion services to veterans at the department's medical centers. The policy supports VA medical centers that provide abortion when the life or health of the mother is deemed to be at risk or in cases of rape or incest, regardless of state restrictions.

This week, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough heralded the U.S. Senate's confirmation of Joshua Jacobs as the department's [new Under Secretary for Benefits](#). This is the first time since 2014 that a confirmed official will assume this role.



Starting July 16th, 988 will be a universal entry point so that no matter where you live in the U.S., you can easily access 24/7 emotional support.

In the meantime, please continue to share 1-800-273-TALK (8255) to be connected with a trained, caring counselor.

We're here for you.

## Upcoming Events

### House Veterans Affairs Committee

Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

"All Hands on Deck: Ending Veteran Homelessness in San Diego"

May 4 @ 4:30 p.m.

[Watch it HERE](#)

### Senate Veterans Affairs Committee

Examining the Effectiveness of the Office of Integrated Veteran Care

POSTPONED

[See updates HERE](#)



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