



March 5, 2021

The Honorable Jon Tester
Chairman
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Takano
Chairman
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
420 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Bost
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
1211 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Tester and Takano, Ranking Members Moran and Bost:

On behalf of the men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and its Auxiliary, I am proud to offer our support for the *Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans' and Caregivers' COVID-19 Immunizations Now Expanded Act of 2021*, or the VA VACCINE Act, which would expand VA's distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to veterans and their caregivers.

The fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus has plagued the world population for over a year. In mid-December, VA began its vaccine distribution in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance and the VA COVID-19 Vaccination Distribution Plan. Less than three months later, over 1.45 million veterans have received their initial dose of the vaccine, and over 741,000 veterans have completed the two-dose COVID-19 vaccination series, according to VA's website.

We cannot come out of this global pandemic until herd immunity is achieved. Once fully immunized, the risk of hospitalization or death because of the COVID-19 virus decreases. Therefore, vaccinated individuals not only protect themselves, but they protect their community. VA has the opportunity to immunize countless veterans and their caregivers. The VFW supports this legislation as it expands VA's authority to vaccinate all veterans, their caregivers, and veterans overseas against the COVID-19 virus.

The VFW looks forward to working with you and your staff to ensure the passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

VINCENT "BJ" LAWRENCE
Executive Director
VFW Washington Office

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WASHINGTON OFFICE