



★ ★ ★ LEGISLATIVE WEEKLY ★ ★ ★

August 15, 2025

WEEKLY GRASSROOTS NEWSLETTER

This week, we are asking Legionnaires to contact Congress to request support for the *Service Dogs Assisting Veterans (SAVES) Act*! This legislation proposes a five-year pilot program for the VA to award grants to nonprofit organizations to provide trained service dogs to eligible veterans, cover the cost of training, and provide life-long veterinary insurance. *The American Legion supports this legislation, and we appreciate all the emails you have sent so far.*

Go to the [Action Center](#) to quickly email a letter of support to your members of Congress.

Have you had a recent meeting or phone call with your member of Congress? Report your contact today! Click [here](#) to register your Congressional contact and demonstrate the power of The American Legion advocacy in action.

NEED TO FIND YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS?

<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Address>

TOP GRASSROOTS DEPARTMENTS

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Wisconsin | 84 |
| Kansas | 76 |
| Tennessee | 47 |
| West Virginia | 39 |
| New York | 38 |

These are the number of e-mail messages these Departments sent to Congress on the VoterVoice campaigns this past week.

Register more participants in your Department to increase the number of veteran voices advocating on the Hill!

<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register>

CONVENTION RECAP!

On Saturday, August 23, the Legislative Commission met in Tampa for a Commission meeting unlike any other before. After a Q&A panel with staff members from the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs, the legislative division staff and Legislative Chairman held a hands-on workshop on Congressional meetings. The meeting attendees split up into groups and held mock meetings, practicing how to effectively express to Members of Congress and their staff members why The Legion's legislative priorities matter. Groups also presented in front of everyone, receiving important and insightful feedback from the Congressional staffers and Legion staff.

The success of this training is already paying off! After returning from National Convention, Lee Hinkleman (NY) met with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer. Senator Schumer said that The Legion has his full support on the ACCESS Act, and also said he will be joining the Sons of The American Legion.



The handouts and worksheets used during the meeting will be posted on the website soon, but for now, they are attached as PDFs to this email—we wanted to make sure you could get them as soon as possible.

NDAA DEBATE IN BOTH CHAMBERS PLANNED FOR NEXT WEEK

This article's original publication can be found [here](#)

Senate leaders plan to start debating fiscal 2026 National Defense Authorization Act amendments in earnest on Sept. 9 and hope to conclude work on the bill by the end of next week, a senior congressional official told reporters Thursday evening.

The Senate bill (S 2296) sets policy and authorizes \$914.2 billion in spending on national security programs, not including \$11 billion authorized by other committees.

The House, meanwhile, also plans to debate its own \$882.6 billion version of the NDAA (HR 3838) next week.

Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman, filed a substitute version of the chamber's NDAA on Tuesday, which was modified slightly in a Thursday update that was not yet publicly available.

The updated measure includes a Division E that is a so-called manager's package of 49 amendments, including the intelligence authorization act, which sets policy and authorizes spending for U.S. spy agencies.

Although the amounts authorized by the intelligence measure are classified, the publicly available portion of the bill would require an inspector general review of policies and procedures governing use of commercial messaging applications by the intelligence community. Several Trump administration officials, including Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, came under fire earlier this year after they discussed military strikes in Yemen in a group chat on Signal.

It also would mandate a threat assessment on unmanned aircraft systems near U.S. borders and improved monitoring requirements for Iranian uranium enrichment.

The manager's package of amendments comprises 20 amendments from each party that were agreed upon by both sides, plus nine bipartisan proposals, the official said.

Besides the intelligence bill, the manager's block of amendments includes provisions affecting hypersonic missile development, export controls on artificial intelligence chips and repeal of purportedly outdated defense acquisition laws.

The manager's package also would add new language combating Russia, China and Iran. One provision would express a sense of Congress on Russia's abduction of Ukrainian children, while another would modify an existing annual reporting requirement to include information about Russia's use of chemical weapons.

The package also would include proposals to add language to modernize the defense capabilities of the Philippines and to require a strategy to counter China's expansion of global military bases. And it would allow the U.S. to treat as its own stocks any weapon or material it seizes in transit from Iran to the Houthis in Yemen.

Another provision would require a regular report to Congress on food insecurity in the military, a key priority of defense-minded lawmakers from both parties.

The official said senators are working on a second manager's package that will include the State Department authorization bill.

And senators are also planning to hold roll call votes — subject to an agreement by Senate leaders — on perhaps a dozen amendments, a mix of proposals from both parties.

Democrats are expected to seek votes on amendments pertaining to National Guard policing of U.S. cities, the official said.

Both parties are clamoring for votes on scores of other priorities that proponents hope can hitch a ride on the must-pass NDAA, the official added.

The Senate adjourned Thursday until the afternoon of Sept. 8 and that evening will vote on confirmation of a judicial nominee — potentially leaving the rest of the week for the NDAA.

HOUSE RESOLUTION INTROEDUCED TO HONOR AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL'S CENTENNIAL

This article's original publication can be found [here](#)



Program's impact on more than 10 million young people highlighted in measure.

U.S. Rep. Tim Burchett, R-Tenn., introduced a house resolution Tuesday, Aug. 26, to recognize the influence and impact of American Legion Baseball over the last century. The program celebrated its 100th year July 17, 2025. It became a national American Legion program in October 1925.

H.R. 663, "Celebrating 100 years of The American Legion Baseball program and honoring its legacy of mentoring young Americans," is expected to go the full House of Representatives for a vote in September.

The resolution recognizes the program as "a source of mentorship, physical fitness, athletic excellence, and sportsmanship for over 10,000,000 participants around the country and beyond" and that it "continues to serve the American public by providing unique character building and athletic opportunities to young Americans across the country, including the American Legion World Series in Shelby, North Carolina."

The program, which has seen 89 of its former players inducted in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., and has imparted a code of sportsmanship and citizenship that has guided millions into lives of public service, business, entertainment, education and other fields, now involves some 50,000 athletes and 3,500 teams in all 50 states, as well as Canada and Puerto Rico.

[Full text of the resolution can be seen at congress.gov.](https://www.congress.gov/house/118/legislation/663)

LEGIONNAIRE OF THE WEEK

To recognize the weekly accomplishments of our Legionnaires, we will spotlight an individual every week. These individuals demonstrate exceptional grassroots activism by meeting with/contacting their Congressional Representative/Senator to advocate for veterans. Efforts like these truly make a difference and give veterans a voice in Congress.

Mark Shreve, Georgia

Mark, thank you for your steadfast advocacy of Legion priorities; we are honored to name you Legionnaire of the Week!

Mark recently attended a press conference held by Senator John Ossoff to celebrate the passing of the VA Home Loan Reform Act. He was interviewed for TV along with two American Legion Post Commanders. In the interview, he discussed the need for ongoing bipartisanship to address homelessness and mental health for veterans. Two previously homeless veterans were also interviewed. There were around 18 American Legion members in attendance of the press conference.

Thank you, Mark, for your report and the time you have dedicated to the Legion's legislative priorities.

GRASSROOTS INFORMATION

Interested in what the Legion is advocating for in Congress? Check out our [information papers and Legislative priorities](#). This is a great starting point for a conversation with your elected officials!

As part of our ongoing Grassroots efforts, LegDiv staff is available to provide **Grassroots Training** tailored to the hosting Department's needs. If you are interested in hosting a Grassroots training event, please contact grassroots@legion.org or ejohnson@legion.org.

You can find relevant legislation and the Legion's stance on them in the [key legislation section of VoterVoice](#).

Register for Action Alerts today at
<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register>



UPCOMING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

As of 9/5, the following hearings are scheduled:

- Wednesday, September 10, 4:00 PM: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs – *Hearing to Consider a Pending Nomination*
- Thursday, September 11, 9:30 AM: Senate Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee Hearing – *To Consider the Nomination of General Christopher J. Mahoney, USMC for Reappointment to the Grade of General and to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*

HVAC hearings can be viewed at: [Calendar Home | House Committee on Veterans Affairs](#)

SVAC hearings can be viewed at: [Hearings - U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs](#)

HASC hearings can be viewed at: [Hearings – House Armed Services Committee](#)

SASC hearings can be viewed at: [Hearings – U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services](#)

[View The American Legion Legislative Handbook Here](#)