

Legislative

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Legislation

When you are in a group, and the topic of conversation is our present governing body and legislation, do you feel uneasy? You don't have to be knowledgeable in politics to advocate for our Veterans. There is a lot of material on both our web sites, Department and National, which are very informative with issues concerning our Veterans. Get involved and let's educate ourselves. You along with over 1.5 million VFW and Auxiliary members can influence our lawmakers on how they will approach and lobby for Veterans and their families.

You can study the priority goals, which are listed on the National website at vfwauxiliary.org and select "What We Do" then click "Legislative". There are 6 new priority goals which represents the resolutions that need past or are still pending by the VFW and Washington. These goals reinforce, strengthen, and ensure that our Veterans, present and future, will have a smooth and efficient VA system.

The six areas of concern are:

- Budget
- Health Care
- Disability and Memorial Affairs
- Education, Unemployment and Transition Assistance
- Military Quality of Life
- National Security, Foreign Affairs, and POW-MIA

In January, of each year, there are new goals presented by the VFW. For the present goals, please view them on either the VFW or Auxiliary websites. You can find the present priority goals and information in our VFW Auxiliary March 2022 magazine, for the members who don't have a computer.

VFW Action Corps Weekly

This doesn't need a credit card or cash to subscribe to see all the information and current actions on Capitol Hill regarding Veteran and service member actions. For those members with access to an electronic device please go on the National website vfwauxiliary.org and select "What We Do" then click on Legislative. This shows all our members the important Legislation currently on the docket. We can identify our congressional representatives by visiting the website vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-efforts.

Educate

We need to focus on three things for achieving our goals:

- We need to build a relationship with our political and civic organizations directed toward our young adults.
- We must ensure that our activities are nonpartisan.
- We need to get creative so the government officers will take notice.

Getting civic organizations at colleges, the Young Republicans National Federation, Young Democrats of America, ROTC, sororities, and fraternities of the colleges. Reach out and introduce yourself to the leaders of the organization and develop a partnership with the young adults.

Some areas of discussion:

- Talk about the VFW's Action Corp weekly and where these adults can sign up. The site is vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-efforts/vfw-action-corps-weekly.
- Invite them as a special guest to your Post and Auxiliary events.
- Ask for assistance using social media to contact the elected officers.
- Offer our assistance at their events such as voter registration.
- Copy and send VFW Action Alerts to them by email. Do not forward the information to ensure you're not unsubscribed.
- Ask about the veterans of their generation and their specific needs.

We will have a better understanding of the responses the young adults have toward the youngest generation of Veterans, by keeping an open line of communication with them. Remember why we joined the Auxiliary which was to honor our loved ones...what better way than to see they are fairly represented.

Get Others Involved

Ensure that every member is registered to vote. Each time your Auxiliary hosts a membership event they should also host a voter registration. Hold a candidate town hall meeting where questions can be presented to them regarding their standing of Veterans and Service-related issues. At different events ask the youth in attendance what a Veteran and his service to our nation means to them. Ask them if they have a family member who is a veteran or on active duty. These are just a few of the ideas for our Auxiliary members to become actively involved in inspiring good representation in our elected offices.

Participate

Legislative activity is not the same as political activity. Every member is free to say whatever and whomever they might like as a political liaison before and after the Auxiliary meeting, but there is no place for partisanship when conducting any Auxiliary business. We must not show any favoritism for any candidate. This is very important because today's military is made up of liberals, conservatives, moderates, republicans and democrats. Our service men and women deserve legislation which makes their daily lives better. Remember to be creative, the program will be fun, and our legislators will receive a very strong message. There are so many ideas to use when contacting our legislators. Write a little poem when either mailing or emailing your legislators, remind the legislators to "stick" by the Veterans, mailing them a coupon for tape or glue, use tissues to show all the tears shed for the 22 Veterans who commit suicide every day. The more creative you are, the better your chances will be in showing the legislators you are not joking.

The VFW and VFW Auxiliary Advocates are not only respected but are taken very seriously in Washington, D. C. Hard work and the persistence by our members have attributed to their tenacity. The contact information is

Website: vfw.org/advocacy

Phone: 202-543-2239

Mail: 200 Maryland Ave N.E. Washington, D.C. 20002

As we begin a new year we need to “**Respect...Honor...Remember**” our Veterans as we show “**Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care**” for our Veterans.

National Legislative Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding consistent partnership and/or communication with young adult civic and/or political groups.

*Citation to every Auxiliary that maintains a consistent partnership and/or communication with young adult civic and/or political groups. Criteria and entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Legislative Chairman by March 31, 2023. Citations will be mailed directly to the participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

*Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding consistent partnership and/or communication with young adult civic and/or political groups. Winners will be announced, and awards presented at the 2023 National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

Department Legislative Awards for Auxiliaries

1. A citation to one Auxiliary in each Membership Division with the best training on the Legislative process using the Legislative material/resources available on the National VFW Auxiliary website. (Must submit written description, photos, fliers, etc. to Department Chairman)
2. A citation to one Auxiliary in each Membership Division that has the most members corresponding with legislators.
3. A citation to one Auxiliary in each District that has the most members sign up for Action Corp Weekly. District Presidents need to submit these with their year-end reports.
4. A citation to the top three Auxiliary Chairmen who creates the best email correspondence for their politician. It can be a variety of styles making a more memorable impression. (Must submit proof to Department Chairman.)

ALL OBLIGATIONS INCLUDING AUDITS, BONDS, DELEGATE FEES, PLEDGES, SUPPLIES, ETC. TO NATIONAL, DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AND DISTRICT MUST BE MET FOR YOUR AUXILIARY/DISTRICT PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMEN TO QUALIFY FOR AWARDS.