

I am proud to be leading the House effort to codify the National VA History Center (NVAHC) within the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs. H.R. 6947, the Veterans Affairs Centennial and Heritage Act of 2024, would codify this institution and ensure the story of America's veterans and the VA is preserved for future generations. This legislation is bipartisan and bicameral. I want to thank Rep. Landsman for his work on this issue, as well as Ohio Senators Vance and Brown for their work on the Senate companion bill.

For decades, the Dayton VA has served the healthcare needs of over 40,000 veterans in our community, going above and beyond to provide our service members with the benefits that they earned protecting our freedoms.

The Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center is among the finest facilities for veterans' services in the United States, and I am pleased that it is the home for the future museum and archives for VA history. The National VA History Center currently exists only pursuant to VA Department Memoranda, but this legislation would codify the center through an Act of Congress.

Once complete, the NVAHC will be the central location for seminal artifacts and archives of historic significance from across hundreds of VA locations. The site will provide storage, preservation, and access to these materials, as well as a museum and education center. The project will include robust online access to digitized materials for researchers, writers, and scholars, and virtual museum exhibits available to the public.

Located on the Dayton VA Medical Center campus, the NVAHC will include multiple historic buildings: the Old Headquarters, the Clubhouse and the Putnam Library. These buildings are some of the oldest on the 450-acre campus, dating to 1871, 1881 and 1880, respectively.

The Veterans Affairs Centennial and Heritage Act will preserve the Department of Veterans Affairs' history of outstanding work and document the special relationship between the United States and our veterans. I thank you for the opportunity to speak today and welcome any questions.