

Today I am writing in support of the bill, Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach (CVSO) Act, which I helped introduce alongside my colleagues Rep. Mike Levin, Rep. Tim Ryan, and Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers. This bill would authorize \$50 million annually to expand the critical work of County Veterans Service Officers (CVSOs). County Veterans Service Officers are a critical resource in ensuring that our veterans are actually able to access and utilize the benefits they have earned. They are very knowledgeable about the VA system and understand how the benefits are actually processed and accessed.

The VA can be a confusing, overwhelming bureaucratic system and these talented individuals play a critical role in advocating for veterans. They tend to be the first point of contact in the community for veterans' services and have a positive, reassuring impact on the lives of veterans. It has been shown that CVSOs successfully process more than \$86 billion in veterans' benefit claims annually. We cannot ignore this success. Currently, CVSOs do not receive federal support for the important work that they do. I am confident that the CVSO Act would have numerous lasting benefits for veterans including the ability for more CVSOs to be hired and for improved outreach to veterans.

We know that CVSOs work. This bill is common sense and helps ensure that veterans get the care they need. I urge everyone here today to support this legislation.