



February 28, 2025

The Honorable Morgan Luttrell, Chairman  
House Veterans' Affairs Committee  
Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs  
364 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20003

The Honorable Morgan McGarvey, Ranking Member  
House Veterans' Affairs Committee  
Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs  
364 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Chairman Luttrell, Ranking Member McGarvey and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you on behalf of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America's (IAVA) and our more than 425,000 members nationwide to offer perspective as the debate around veterans' hiring private services to access their earned benefits continues in Congress.

IAVA is the leading voice of the post-9/11 generation of America's veterans - a generation of veterans that's endured multiple deployments fighting in endless wars, just to have to come home and fight to get the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) care and benefits they've earned. Do I wish that wasn't the case? Of course. But that fact is that many of our members are simply trying to live their lives and raise their families, and they're doing so with the added burden of headaches at the hands of the VA.

We all know that the VA health system has incredible care with cultural competency that's near impossible to find elsewhere, and that our nation has prioritized investing in its newest generation of war veterans in order to ensure they're adequately thanked for their volunteer service in defense of our country. But if the process of accessing the care and benefits that they've earned is too much of a headache, then what is it all for?

Our members are also strong advocates of modernizing the VA to help make the claims and benefits process more efficient, effective and in line with the times. But as we wait for long overdue improvements at the VA, if a veteran finds it in their interest to pay someone who is better at navigating VA's bureaucracy than they are to help connect them to their earned care and benefits, why should we stand in their way?

To be clear, we should also definitely not stand idly by if bad actors are taking advantage of veterans who are overwhelmed by complicated and often lengthy claims process at the VA, but that doesn't mean that all companies that receive compensation to help connect veterans to their benefits fall in such a category. In fact, some are veteran-owned themselves and are just looking to help their fellow veterans.

The debate in Washington, D.C. over the last several years has largely centered on proposals to reinstate criminal penalties on unaccredited entities who charge veterans fees for help with their disability claims. Rather than legislating protections against specific predatory practices, these proposals have taken an "all or nothing" approach, with an attempt to make it illegal to charge *any* fee to veterans for claims

assistance, regardless of whether a valuable service is being provided and that a veteran deems it's in their interest to pay for.

This all or nothing approach has not been successful. It has resulted in a legislative stalemate that has left many veterans confused about who they can enlist to help them navigate the VA's bureaucracy, while at the same time allowing predatory practices to persist. Efforts in the states have complicated things further, and it's time for the Congress to step up to the plate and find a reasonable solution for a way forward for veterans on this front.

IAVA is not endorsing any specific bill before this Committee, however, we insist that you and your colleagues in Congress work together and find common ground that puts veterans first, which includes cracking down on predatory practice while also giving those veterans who want them, more options to help them access the care and benefits they need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Allison Jaslow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Allison" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Jaslow".

Allison Jaslow  
IAVA CEO  
Iraq War Veteran

cc. The Honorable Mike Bost, Chairman  
The Honorable Mark Takano, Ranking Member