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# CVA'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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## **VETERANS COMMUNITY CARE AND ACCESS ACT OF 2017 (S. 2184)**

The legislation would better integrate the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) with community health care providers & expand health care options to enhance veterans' access to quality care. The bill consolidates the VA's existing community care programs, creates clear standards for when a veteran can access care outside of the VA, and improves the process for reimbursing community providers. It would also require the VA to contract with community providers to create a series of walk-in clinics to ensure that veterans have access to urgent care.

## **VETERANS EMPOWERMENT ACT (H.R. 4457)**

The legislation would fundamentally reform how the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) delivers health care to our veterans. It will offer all veterans who use the VHA the ability to access care in the private sector through a veterans' health insurance program and would restructure the VHA medical facilities into a government-chartered nonprofit to make the VHA more responsive to the changing demands of the veteran population. It will also increase transparency and allow for more effective oversight by requiring the VA to publicly report more information about its health care services.

## **VETERANS EMPLOYEES AND TAXPAYER (VET) PROTECTION ACT (S. 2288/H.R. 1461)**

Currently, upwards of 350 VA employees – including clinicians - spend 100 percent of their time during work hours devoted to supporting union activities. The VET Protection Act would right-size the amount of time VA employees can devote to union activities during work hours and ensure clinicians are doing the work the VA hired them to do – care for patients. The legislation would also mandate that the VA more effectively track how employees are using their time and require the VA to make regular reports to Congress on the use of official times.

## **VA ASSET AND INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW ACT OF 2017 (AIR ACT - H.R. 4243)**

The VA is currently forced to spend tens of millions of dollars every year to maintain empty buildings. Additionally, the majority of the VA's medical centers are over fifty years old, with many underutilized or not designed to serve the current veteran population. The AIR Act would mandate that the VA assess its current infrastructure footprint and then make recommendations to modernize and realign its medical infrastructure. This would ensure that the VA's infrastructure is best positioned to serve the future veteran population and stop wasting resources on empty or underutilized buildings.

## **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REFORM: BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE**

According to the Department of Defense (DoD), the military has an excess basing capacity of nearly 20 percent. By authorizing another round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Congress could help the DoD save up to \$2 billion a year. In the upcoming National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Congress should change current law to allow the Department of Defense to conduct a round of BRAC in 2021.