

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT, JULY, 2020

by

Larry E. Nazimek

1. At our Feb. meeting, member organizations that were present volunteered to work on the congressional delegations of the states they selected, but so far, we have not had any new cosponsors from these states or any others (Harold Washington American Legion: MN, NWVU: IN, Veterans for Peace: HI, Blue Star Platoon: WI, Vet Tech US: MI). We can still contact congressional staffers, even though there is the COVID-19 pandemic. At the meeting, I will ask the reps of the various organizations about how things have been going for them on getting more co-sponsors.

2. As for all of the other bills that we have been advocating/tracking, there has been no progress on any of them. On the Federal level: H. R. 3932/S. 1573 (elimination of co-pays for preventive treatment) and H. R. 6845/S. 3724 (no co-payments for preventive services relating to COVID-19).

On the State level: HJR 84 (resolution urging the IL Congressional Delegation to cosponsor/support HR 96), H. R. 4903 (Veterans Bill of Rights), and H. B. 4944 (that would consider vets with less than honorable administrative discharges the same as those with Honorable Discharges when it comes to State programs). HJR 84 could get passed in late Nov./early Dec., but nothing will happen before that.

3. Regarding the VA's dental pilot program that was introduced in the Federal Register on Dec. 13, we are still waiting for an update. I received a reply to my voice mails to the VA Innovation Center, and all they could say is that the update will be published in the Federal Register. I was told to subscribe to their newsletter and to the Federal Register. Unfortunately, my inner need for incoming emails is being overmet.

4. Regarding Aspen Dental's annual Day of Service, it appears as though it will not happen this year, and there hasn't been any updates on their Mouth Mobile. If you hear anything regarding Aspen, please notify me, and in the meantime, I will keep looking.

5. The WiFi signal is up at JBVAMC, but many people, including me, can't connect to it, but I'm working on it. Until we have reliable WiFi, we can not hold hybrid meetings (where we have an in-person meeting, where those who can't attend can still "attend" with Zoom).

6. The next JBVAMC Stakeholders Meeting will take place June 29. I will represent CVO.