

Coalition of Veterans Organizations

CVO

*Leave No
Veteran Behind*

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

PREPARED BY
LARRY E. NAZIMEK



JANUARY 2023

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT, January 2023

by

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1. We are now in the 118th Congress, so bills that were proposed, but not enacted, in the 117th Congress are all dead. Many of them will be reintroduced.

2. Future JBVAMC Town Hall Meetings will be tentatively held on March 14, June 13, Sept. 12, and a CBOC Town Hall Meeting on Aug. 8. There will be Women's Health Town Hall meeting on April 14. Future Town Hall Meetings dealing with Women's Health and Mental Health will be scheduled.

3. Some years ago, we established liaisons to the local congressional offices. Once the new congressmen get their offices established, we should do this again. It's a matter of establishing a good relationship with the local staffer who handles veterans. This is sometimes a 2 way relationship, where they may come to us, when they have questions about the VA.

4. I attend the JBVAMC Town Hall Meetings (except for those dealing with Women's or Mental Health, or certain specialized topics), and so should everyone else who gets his healthcare at JBVAMC. I am the CVO representative for their Stakeholders Meetings, and sometimes, for the Government Officials Meetings. Previously, the Government representatives attended the Stakeholder Meetings, and I wish this were still the case, as it enabled me to meet them and get their business cards.

JBVAMC now has monthly Veterans and Family Advisory Council Meetings. At first, I felt that these would be redundant with the Stakeholders Meetings, but such is not the case; the hospital's administration is taking our complaints and suggestions seriously, and we are making progress.

A problem with Town Hall Meetings, is that too many people want to discuss their personal problems instead of issues that pertain to a large number of vets. Those with questions, however, who don't get to ask them, because time has run out, can have their questions taken up with the Patient Advocates.

Mike Fehrenbacher will be attending the same meetings at Hines. As we get members from places outside of Chicago, it is hoped that they will participate in the meetings at their respective VAMCs.

5. I am our "delegate" to the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County. Improvements are being made, and more veterans are receiving help. In addition to their monthly meetings, I serve on the Services Committee. My need for meetings is being met several times over.