

Coalition of Veterans Organizations

**CVO**

*Leave No  
Veteran Behind*

# **VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

PREPARED BY  
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**JUNE 2023**

## VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT, JUNE, 2023

by

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1. In reporting legislation that has been introduced, the same bills and writeups from the previous month will be repeated, with new bills or changes in **boldface**.

2. S. 10: VA Careers Act of 2023: Legislation to bolster efforts to recruit and retain strong clinical and managerial leadership in the VA health care system and make other important improvements to attract clinicians in scarce medical specialties. It has **9** co-sponsors, none from IL.

3. S. 42: Build for Veterans Act of 2023: This infrastructure bill has 4 co-sponsors, none from IL.

4. S.141: Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act: It expands the program for home care. It has **20** co-sponsors, none from IL. **H. R. 542 (House version) has 52 co-sponsors, 3 from IL (Underwood, Budzinski, Schakowsky).**

5. Cong Julia Brownley introduced H. R. 2413: Dental Care for Veterans Act, the same as H. R. 96 and H.R. 914. It has **5** co-sponsors, **4** from IL (Garcia, Quigley, **Schakowsky, Underwood**).

I can email you the letters that I send (one for those who previously co-sponsored and one for those who have not) so you can use it, or if you give me the email address of a congressman's DC staffer who handles veterans issues, I can email it, but if they don't co-sponsor, you can call them 2 weeks later.

Brownley's Office has not sent a "Dear Colleagues" letter (asking other congressmen to co-sponsor), but if she does, I will spam it out.

The American Inst. For Dental Public Health is sending a letter to the heads of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Cmtes., and we were one of the many vet groups to sign on. When I get a finalized copy with all the organizations listed, I will spam it out. It should be an attachment to letters to cong.

**6. H. R. 2410: VET CARE Act of 2023: It establishes a pilot program for dental care, but it's essentially the same thing as the previous one that we never got. It has 7 co-sponsors, none from IL.**

7. For local congressmen, we need "ambassadors," who will meet with the local congressional staffers who handle veterans issues, in order to establish and maintain a working relationship.

The IL Congressional Delegation:

<https://www.congress.gov/members?q=%7B%22congress%22%3A118%2C%22member-state%22%3A%22Illinois%22%7D>

8. Veterans and Family Advisory Council (monthly meetings):

Had presentation on all the things being done for the LGBTQetc. Gender surgery has been approved, but will not take place until the VA Secretary signs the bill. Of course, money for dental care is not available.

9. The quarterly JBVAMC Town Hall Meetings are still being done via telephone/facebook. After initial announcements, it has been numerous questions on personal issues. The good thing, however, is that if

you indicate that you have a question, and they don't get to you, you can leave a message and get a callback from a Patient Advocate.

They announced that masks are now optional, for the most part, but don't be surprised if a certain clinic requires it. There are certain places where employees are required to mask up

10. At the Stakeholders Meeting, Dir. Ricky Ament, said that the VA wants to hire a lot more people, but the job titles are often misunderstood by people who, if not for the title, would apply. In other words, the same job may have more than one title, and the person may not be familiar with the title used in the VA's job announcement. He said that if a person wants to work for the VA, that they should apply.

11. Google had a big hiring event for vets that included an hour long interview with Jon Stewart, who has been a leading advocate for vets. There were many messages in the chat, so I put in one that asked him to advocate for dental care for vets. I don't know if he ever got to see it.