



PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Veterans of America

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Proposed Cuts to IU a Non-Starter, Administration Acknowledges

(Washington, D.C.)--“It was a bad idea to begin with, unworkable and essentially uncaring for almost a quarter of a million veterans over the age of 62,” said John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America, referring to a provision in the President’s \$186.5 billion budget proposal for FY18 that would take thousands of dollars in Individual Unemployability (IU) benefits from the most vulnerable of veterans. “Now the administration has seen the light and retreated from their poorly-reasoned plan.”

“Here at VVA, we have been deluged by calls from our members,” Rowan said. “They are concerned. They are scared. Some are angry. They fear a personal financial disaster that could cost them their house, their savings, their very life.”

“The administration’s plan was, in effect, to take from Peter to pay for Paul, to eviscerate the IU program to make available funds to enhance and expand the so-called Choice program, to the tune of \$3.2 billion in FY’18,” noted Rowan.

“Just as an avalanche of calls and e-mails struck all through the VSO and MSO community, so too did VVA and our fellow organizations send letters and offer firm and focused testimony blasting the proposal at a Senate hearing,” Rowan said.

“Once the politically astute in the administration recognized the folly of cutting benefits, which could cost certain veterans almost \$20,000 a year, they reversed field, acknowledging that theirs was a non-starter, and that Congress wasn’t going to go along with the proposal,” Rowan concluded.

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is the nation's only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA's founding principle is "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."

