



PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Veterans of America

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 11, 2017

No. 17-38

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Congressman Mike Coffman

Honored as 2017 VVA “Legislator of the Year”

(New Orleans, LA) –*“We are proud to recognize Congressman Mike Coffman as Vietnam Veterans of America 2017 Legislator of the Year,”* said John Rowan, VVA National President. *“We are recognizing Congressman Coffman for his leadership in introducing and fighting for bills that will have a profound impact on veterans of all eras, as well their children and their children’s children,”* said Rowan.

Rep. Coffman traveled to New Orleans to receive his award on Friday morning, August 11, before the delegates and guests assembled for VVA’s 18th National Convention at the Sheraton New Orleans, at 500 Canal Street, in the Grand Ballroom.

“I’m so honored to receive this award from the Vietnam Veterans of American. My heart has always been with them for having fought such a difficult war without the full support of the American people,” said Coffman, a Marine Corps combat veteran.

Congressman Coffman, representing Colorado’s 6th congressional district, has been a leader on Veterans’ issues. He recently introduced H.R. 918, the ‘*Veteran Urgent Access to Mental Healthcare Act*’, a bipartisan piece of legislation that recently passed the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs with unanimous support and seeks to give combat veterans with ‘other-than-honorable’ (OTH) discharges, as well as military sexual assault victims, direct access to VA mental health care services. The bill also calls for the VA Secretary to establish a formal character of service determination process to rightfully trigger reviews of the character of discharge for potential eligibility of VA benefits. Additionally, he is cited for having sponsored the ‘*Fairness for Veterans Act*’, which offers hope to veterans discharged by the military with OTH discharges, and which was included in the FY17’ National Defense Authorization Act, which was signed into law last year.

Coffman, a Marine combat veteran, is the only sitting Member of Congress to have served in both Iraq Wars. Coffman has one of the most diverse military backgrounds in Congress and has been able to bring his 21 years of military experience to both the House Armed Services Committee and the Veterans’ Affairs Committee.