



## PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Veterans of America

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Appeals Modernization Bill Falls Short

(Washington, DC)—On August 23, 2017, President Trump signed into law the *Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017*, a bill which dramatically overhauls the claims and appeals process for veterans seeking disability compensation benefits to which they are entitled.

“While the *Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017* is touted as a means for veterans to receive ‘faster and more efficient decisions,’ we fear this new law limits due process protections and fails to address—much less fix—the fundamental problems with the broken claims system, the need for binding legal precedent,” said John Rowan, VVA National President.

“Under this new law, without a precedent-setting mechanism that actually works, veterans who have nearly identical records will continue to receive drastically different decisions, and the never-ending churn of cases between all levels of appeal will go on and on,” noted Rowan.

“Making a claims system more efficient at the expense of veterans is not justice for veterans. We know the job to fix the broken appeals system is far from over. Vietnam Veterans of America remains committed to working with the best legal minds in America--in Congress and elsewhere--to develop legislation that would establish an appeals system that works to address, first and foremost, the needs of veterans and not just the needs of VA,” continued Rowan.

“America’s veterans deserve a claims system that is just, consistent, and efficient. In the short term, it is up to VVA and our fellow veterans’ service organizations and stakeholders to ensure that the regulations promulgated to implement this law are consistent with a pro-veteran and non-adversarial claims system. We are confident that our colleagues will join in this effort to make the regulations as fair as possible, within the limits of this new statute,” said Rowan.

*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.”*

