



PRESS RELEASE

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Veterans Day Message from VVA President Jack McManus

(Washington, D.C.) – Today, we recognize our 19 million living veterans, our soldiers, sailors, airmen, guardians, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen to whom we owe a great debt of gratitude for the freedoms we share as a nation — and we remember and HONOR our heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of liberty and justice, and their honored spouses, parents, and survivors, many whom are with us here today.

To our comrades who remain MIA, we remain true to our solemn promise to bring you home. May God bless you and your families.

We have come a long way since 1978, when Vietnam Veterans of America had its start. Our members, chapters, and state councils have worked hard in their communities and with their legislators to ensure that ALL VETERANS receive the respect and the gratitude they so rightly deserve.

We have lived up to our founding principle, “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.” We are especially proud to see that our fight to change the public perception of Vietnam veterans has paid off, and that our newest generation of veterans is coming home to a warm welcome from a very supportive country.

To divide one veteran’s service, based upon its distinction in time or location at the expense of another veteran’s equally honorable service, is an injustice to both veterans. Could we really believe that the sacrifices of the veterans lost in the Beirut Barracks, or at the Embassy in Benghazi were any less a sacrifice than those lost in Fallujah, Iraq, or Khe Sanh, Vietnam?

If our nation, in all its institutions, had simply recognized my generation of veterans was as deserving of the honor and distinction of being recognized for being an “American Veteran” as were the veterans of previous, albeit more popular hostilities, that came before us, it is likely VVA never would have come into existence.

As Vietnam veterans, we fought for the first laws assisting veterans suffering from Agent Orange. We are ecstatic with the recent passage of the *PACT Act*, the most comprehensive bill to date that addresses the health effects of Military Toxic Exposures.

We do know this adage to be true: The willingness with which our young men and women are likely to serve in any war is directly proportional to how they perceive veterans in the past, and today, are treated and appreciated by the nation.

We have come a long way. Much remains to be done. The future of our nation is dependent on the young men and women who raise their hand to uphold our Constitution.

Let all those who have served in our nation’s defense be known simply as American veterans. We are the honored and proud few.