

ALA NC Legislative News

November 2021

Chairman: Julie Smith

Juliesmith1960@gmail.com

704-647-1193

Committee Member: Rebecca Higgins

RebeccaB.Higgins@gmail.com

704-419-4512

The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage and empower members to be more knowledgeable to take action on The American Legion's legislative priorities.

Happy 102 Birthday American Legion Auxiliary on November 10, 2021

Please don't forget to honor and remember our veterans on November 11, 2021

Happy Thanksgiving enjoy your time with your family and friends. I encourage you to remember those less fortunate than us and ask you to think of ways you can bless them.

Don't forget to Vote. Remember to post pics of you voting on social media. Voting is a privilege, and it is your responsibility as U.S. Citizens. Good government is a result of well informed and engaged citizens. We are ultimately responsible for how we are governed.

Please don't forget to send me you're a-ha moments when they happen. No Mid-Year Report needed. However, at the End of the year I want to submit to National the Best Unit 's Legislative Program. So, send me pictures and tell me about your activities for the Legislative Program. Juliesmith1960@gmail.com

The Beginning of the Legislative Committee and A Brief Civics Lesson

By Julie Smith

At the end WWI there was not a national VA system. Veterans who returned home with disabilities were often neglected. The American Legion in 1919 petition and lobbied congress to meet the challenges these veterans needed. To do this the American Legion established a National Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee's fist success was in September 1919 when Congress granted the American Legion a Permanent Federal Charter. Since its creation the American Legion has petitioned to enact laws that expand and strengthens benefits for veterans and their families.

Our government is a Republic, in this form of government the people hold the power but elected representatives exercise that power. That is why is very important that you are a well-informed citizen and know what and how your elected representative vote on the issues. Our government is divided into 3 branches. The Legislative Branch makes the laws and is made up of 2 houses. The senate is made up of 2 senators from each state. The number of representatives in the House is based on a state's population. The Executive branch is made up of the President, Vice-President, and cabinet. The Judicial Branch is made up of the Supreme Court which interprets

the law. The first 3 Articles of the U.S. Constitution gives explicit guidelines for each branch. The Constitution also provides a system of checks and balances for each branch. For a copy of the Constitution visit: <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript> I encourage you to read the U.S. Constitution.

Bills can start either in the House of Representatives or in the Senate. You can identify bills introduced in Congress by its number. Numbers are assigned at the time of and order of their introduction into congress. If the bill begins in the Senate the bill starts with a “S” followed by the bill’s number. If the bill begins in the House, they are identified by the letters H.R. and the bill’s numbers.

Many of you have asked for Richard Burr and Thom Tillis’s addresses to send your letters They will always be posted in the reminder section of every newsletter.



National American Legion Legislative Commission Chairman, Daniel Seehafer

Mr. Ted Martin is the Department of North Carolina’s Legislative Chairman



American Legion National Commander Paul Dillard visited Washington, D.C., this week to advocate for the nation’s veterans in the halls of Congress. He spoke with leadership of the Senate and House Committee’s on Veterans’ Affairs (SVAC/HVAC) about the American Legion’s legislative priorities and his No Veteran Left Behind initiative.

Commander Dillard with SVAC Ranking Member Jerry Moran (R-KS).

News From the American Legion

“With little notice to servicemembers, the Department of Defense (DOD) terminated the Troops to Teachers program (TTT) this October – and we need your help in calling on Congress to reauthorize the program. [Take action by contacting your Congressman through our Legislative Action Center.](#)

Established in 1993, Troops to Teachers was designed to assist transitioning servicemembers and veterans to begin careers as educators in K-12 public, charter, and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. The Department of Defense reported that the program placed over 21,000 veteran teachers in classrooms since its inception. Additionally, the program provides counseling and referral services to help participants meet education and licensing requirements, as well as helps them secure a teaching position. Since 1993, more than 100,000 veterans have successfully transitioned to a career in education.

In the wake of record teacher shortages across the country, the value of Troops to Teachers cannot be understated. It provides employment assistance to transitioning veterans, which aids in lowering veteran unemployment; it alleviates nationwide teaching shortages, which improves education quality; and it increases access and representation among traditionally less-represented groups to teaching careers. DOD reported that the program placed over 21,000 veteran teachers in classrooms since its inception.

Now is not the time to cut transition pathways for our servicemembers. Studies have proven that veteran educators fill thousands of vacancies in high-needs schools and subject areas; are more likely to not relocate after they are employed as teachers; are considered effective instructors; have high job and life satisfaction; and even have a positive effect on increasing student likelihood to serve.

Senate Section 573 in the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) would reauthorize the Troops-To-Teachers program and produce an assessment illustrating the cost and benefits of the program to members of the armed forces, veterans, and local educational agencies.

The American Legion proudly supports this amendment and asks that you contact your Representatives and tell them to keep Senate Section 573 in the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).”

Legislative News Updates from DC

Late on Thursday evening, October 7th the Senate unanimously passed S. 544, the “Buddy Check Week” Act. This follows over a year of American Legion legislative advocacy, and two years since passage of American Legion Resolution No. 18: *Buddy Check*. Now we must keep pressure on the House of Representative to pass the Senate bill and send it to President Biden to sign. This bill will help veterans who often face mental health challenges when they transition in civilian life. This bill will improve the mental health services for our veterans. Please write letters send emails this week to encourage our Representatives to pass the Buddy Check Bill.

Key Legislation Updates

S. 544: Buddy Check Week Act of 2021

Bill Status: 10/07/2021
Passed Senate without amendment by Unanimous Consent

Co-Sponsors: 21

Staff Notes: Now that S.544 has passed the Senate, it is awaiting action in the House Veterans Affairs

Committee. NLD staff is communicating with House side committee staff to have S.544 swiftly moved through markup and/or an omnibus end of year bill. American Legion Media Relations will do media outreach on this bill.

S.796: Protecting Moms Who Served Act of 2021

Bill Status: 10/07/2021
Passed Senate without amendment by Unanimous Consent

Cosponsors: 7

Staff Notes: Alongside S.544, this bill was passed via unanimous consent. American Legion Media Relations will do media outreach on this bill.

S. 1040: VA Access for WWII Veterans

Bill Status: Committee on Veterans' Affairs ordered to be reported without amendment favorably 7/28/2021

Co-Sponsors: 10

Staff Notes: On June 23 it was the subject of a SVAC Full Committee Hearing where it received VA

support. On July 28 it was ordered to be reported favorably without amendment during an SVAC Full Committee Markup. It is now awaiting scheduling for a vote on the Senate Floor. This month, NLD staff sent a letter to Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell requesting S.1040 be expeditiously scheduled on the Senate Floor for a vote.

H.R. 3967: Honoring our PACT Act of 2021

Bill Status: Reported out 14-11 of House Veterans Affairs Committee 6/24/21

Co-Sponsors: 49

Staff Notes: The House Veterans Affairs Committee marked up the Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2021 and the bill was reported out to the full House.

S.J.Res.10 - A joint resolution to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq

Bill Status: Reported out of Senate Committee on Foreign Relations 08/04/2021

Co-Sponsors: 40

Addresses for U.S. Senators

Thom Tillis
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone# 202-224-6342

Richard Burr
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510
202-224-3154

REMINDERS

What Can You do?

Subscribe to the Legion's Legislative Action Alerts at www.capwiz.com/legion/mlm/signup to subscribe.

Join the National Legislative Facebook page • ALA National Headquarters: www.facebook.com/ALAF or [ALAFVeterans](http://www.facebook.com/ALAFVeterans) The national Legislative Committee Facebook group, search "ALA National Legislative Group Page" 4.

Join the newly created Department Legislative Facebook page NC **ALA Legislative Facebook group**

Download a copy of the **ALA Legislative Advocacy Guide** from **Visit the Legion's**

legislative website, www.legion.org/legislative to keep current on legislative priorities. The site also contains the Legion's legislative priority sheets and point papers, available for download. The priority/drop sheets outline the Legion's priorities, and you can "drop" these in your elected official's office. The point papers provide more information on the issue and the Legion's position.

Actively post The American Legion's legislative priorities on social media.

Identify your U.S. representative and two U.S. senators and build a relationship and rapport with these individuals and/or members of their staff.

Subscribe to e-newsletters of your elected officials to monitor what they consider to be their priorities and to make sure the veteran/military and national security issues are among them. Follow them on social media as well.

For Information on the Municipalities elections for North Carolina <https://www.ncsbe.gov/vo>

[ting/upcoming-election](#)

Voting in local government elections is extremely important. Municipalities control our local tax rates, (property taxes) make decisions about development, policing, trash services and other issues that affect our daily lives Most municipalities in NC conduct election in odd-numbered years. On this website you will find a tab "voting tool kit" that will show you county by county and what election will occur this year and dates for the elections.

***Check out the tab for VOTE IN HONOR OF A VETERAN. You can receive a personalized pin. When you order your pin take a picture of you wearing your pin and post it on the Department Legislative Facebook page.**



<https://ncleg.gov/> Near the bottom of the page click on find your Legislator, enter your address and you will find your North Carolina senators and

**Representatives to the General
Assembly. Click on their name
and you can see their contact
information**

