

April 2025

The SUNSHINE

The Official Publication of The Paralyzed Veterans of America • Florida Chapter

APRIL

SHOWERS

BRING MAY FLOWERS



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ATTENTION FLORIDA CHAPTER WOMEN MEMBERS!

September 27-29 2025
Minneapolis, Minnesota

If you have never been before, please think about attending, it's a life-changing event. Anyone interested in going, please let the office know. We will try to send someone who has never been before 1st, and then go down the list. All-expenses-paid.



Florida Chapter

Paralyzed Veterans of America Florida Chapter

3799 North Andrews Avenue
Oakland Park, Florida 33309

Phone: 954-565-8885 or 800-683-2001

FAX: 954-565-8843

Email: PVAf@aol.com

WEB: pvaflorida.org

*Have you moved or are you planning a move? If you are reading this Newsletter and it was not mailed to you, please call us or e-mail your updated address and contact information:
(954) 565-8885 pvafl@aol.com*

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Sports	
VAVAS, Miami.....	
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PVAF FLORIDA CHAPTER SUB OFFICE

MIAMI VA HEALTH CARE CENTER

1201 North West 16th Street, Room 1C-134
Miami, Florida 33125
Telephone/Fax 305-575-3304

SCI HOTLINE NUMBERS

S.C.I. Outpatient Clinic Practitioner
Direct: 888-276-1785 ext.14520
Appt. Only: 888-274-1785
ext. 13587 or 13588

PVA SERVICE OFFICE

Raul Acosta, NSO
Miami VA Health Care Center
1201 North West 16th Street, Room 1C-139
Miami, Florida 33125
305-575-7180 or 800-795-3591
Fax: 305-575-7181

PVA SERVICE OFFICE

VA Regional Office
P.O. Box 1437
St. Petersburg, Florida 33731-9968
727-319-7470 or 800-795-3594

President's Message

David Zurfluh
PVA Past President

Members,

Hurricane season is approaching. Now is the time to review your plans should evacuation be required and to make sure you have a disaster prepared plan ready to go. Make sure you have water, batteries, flashlights etc. Please search for disaster preparedness plans on your county website and on the internet for more information. Also, please refer to the PVA national disaster relief number in this newsletter if you unfortunately are affected by a disaster.

Below is a list of items the committee has completed and items/areas on which we are focusing.

Completed:

- Opened a new bank account, will have details at next membership meeting.
- New roof on chapter building
- Hired a new employee (Short bio in this newsletter)
- Staff have been making welfare calls to all members on file.
- Created a Chapter inventory list. (Trying to capture all equipment, computers, furniture etc.)
- Have two VAVS representatives so far: Maria Mirand 1st rep, Kenny Roberts 2nd rep.
- Interim Sports Committee Dir: Charles Corley
- Two reps registered for PVA Nat. Convention
- Have two members signed up for Leg/Advocacy training in Washington D. C. (Coordinating with other two Florida Chapters in covering the Florida Congressional Reps and Senators.)
- Chapter Golf tournament in October, contracts signed, committee formed and Flyer ready.
- NVWGS has 10-15 Chapter members signed up.
- Individual Sports/Events fund raising request draft done, point sheet for Sports/Events done as well. (Sports/Events points go into effect October 1st.)
- Fishing event scheduled for June, information to come and number/email contact for members to inquire about.
- PVA Awareness Month Events for April: Chapter Information table will be set up at the Miami VA and SCI Unit.
- April 17th BBQ at the Chapter.
- April 24th Annual Corporate Run Promoting Chapter.

Members, please consider being an awareness ambassador this April for a day, week or month. You can use social media platforms, write a story in school, church or community newsletters. Please consider attending the events mentioned above if you can as well. Remember your voice and experience as a paralyzed veteran with SCI/D matters!

Things we are focusing on:

- Still drafting Chapter Governing Documents and SOPs
- Committees
- Programs
- Website (near completion)
- April 17th Membership Meeting

Hopefully, you are enjoying these updates, please contact the chapter by phone or email if you have any questions or inquiries.

PVA Oversight Committee Chair
PVA Past Nat. President
David L. Zurfluh

Calendar of Events 2025

April 2025

April 03, 2025

Pizza Day
Miami VA Hospital

April 17, 2025

General Membership Meeting
PVA Florida Chapter Office

April 24, 2025

Lexus Corporate Run
Downtown Miami

April 29, 2025

Table at VA - PVA Awareness Month
Miami VA Patio

Visit us on the web at pvaflorida.org



PVAFloridaChapter1956

Membership Report

As of March 31, 2025 PVA Florida Chapter membership consists of 352 regular Members & 122 Associates Members:

PVA Florida Chapter welcomes new member:

The Sunshine

Wants to know what's on Your Mind?

Call or e-mail us with Your ideas, suggestions.
PVAFA@aol.com • 954-565-8885

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VA Facilities

Veterans Health Administration

Toll-Free Hotline (medical care)
1-877-222-8387

VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg

PO Box 1437
St. Petersburg, FL 33731
1-800-827-1000

Regional Processing Office

Atlanta, GA (educational claims)
PO Box 54346
Atlanta, GA 30308
1-888-442-4551

VA Insurance Center

(VA Insurance)
PO Box 42954
Philadelphia, PA 19101
1-800-669-8477

VA Health Administrative Center:

(CHAMPVA and Spina Bida health care)
CHAMPVA inquiries:
PO Box 65023, Denver, CO 80206-5023
CHAMPVA claims:
PO Box 65024, Denver, CO 80206-5024
Spina Bida inquiries and claims:
PO Box 65025, Denver, CO 80206-5025
1-800-733-8387

VA Loan Guaranty Eligibility Center

(Certificates of eligibility)
PO Box 20729
Winston Salem, NC 27120
1-888-244-6711

National Cemetery Administration

Office of Memorial Programs:
(Headstones & markers)
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420
1-800-697-6947
Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) Unit
Chicago VA Regional Office
1-800-829-4833

Miami VA Health Care Medical Center:

1201 NW 16 Street
Miami, FL 33125
1-888-276-1785

VA Outpatient Clinic

9800 West Commercial Blvd.
Sunrise, FL 33351
Phone: (954) 475-5500

VA Medical Center

7305 N Military Trail
West Palm Beach, FL 33410-6400
1-800-972-8262

Advocacy Report

By Michael Fidler, Advocacy Director & Government Relations

Washington Update - Key Issues Impacting PVA Members

Major Legislative Developments & Advocacy Efforts

Government Funding & VA Budget Concerns

- President Trump signed a **Full-Year Government Funding Bill** on March 14, securing funding through **September 30, 2025**.

- **The Good:** An additional **\$6 billion** was allocated to the **VA's Toxic Exposure Fund** to help veterans affected by burn pits and other toxic exposures.

- **The Bad:** **VA facility construction funding was cut by \$800 million**, which could delay improvements to hospitals and care centers.

- **Future Concern:** **The VA faces a potential \$22.8 billion funding shortfall in 2026**, which could **negatively impact healthcare services for paralyzed veterans**.

What This Means for Us: PVA will keep fighting to ensure **our members don't lose access to specialized care** due to budget cuts.

PVA Advocacy on Capitol Hill

- **PVA National President Robert Thomas, Jr.** testified before Congress about the **urgent need for better VA care-and staffing shortages**.

- He also pushed for **long-term care** support for veterans with severe disabilities.

What This Means for Us: We must **continue to advocate** for **specialized spinal cord care** and **not let these cuts impact our healthcare**.

Veteran Benefits & Legislation That Matters to You

Justice for ALS Veterans Act - Ensures families of **ALS veterans get survivor benefits**, even if the veteran didn't meet the **8-year rule**.

ASSIST Act (H.R. 1364) - Fixes issues with the **Veterans' Auto Grant**, ensuring disabled veterans can **get the vehicle adaptations they need**.

Credit for Caring Act - Provides a **\$5,000 tax credit for caregivers** helping disabled veterans at home.

Call to Action: We encourage our members to support these bills! Sign the **PVAction Force** petitions and let your voice be heard.

Get Involved - PVA Advocacy & Surveys

Air Travel Accessibility Study - If you've traveled by air with a disability, you can **help improve airline policies** by joining a **research study** (and get **\$50 compensation**).

Voting Accessibility Survey - Help PVA identify **barriers disabled veterans face in elections** so we can push for better voting access.

Why This Matters: Your participation helps **PVA fight for real changes** in transportation, accessibility, and **veteran rights**.

Final Thoughts - Stay Engaged!

PVA is actively working on **healthcare improvements, caregiver support, and stronger disability rights**.

If you want to help, **sign petitions, contact lawmakers, and join discussions at our chapter meetings**.

We do make a difference—together, we can **protect the benefits and services we fought for!**

Sports Report

Charles Corley

ARCHERY TOURNAMENT- "THE VEGAS SHOOT" AN NFAA EVENT IN LAS VEGAS , NEVADA.

The Tournament started Thursday March 6 and the first round commenced. We had to shoot three rounds of 30 arrows each for a total of 90 arrows.

Friday was the second round and was very tense. Saturday was the final round and unfortunately I didn't place in the Championship round because of my point ratio.

There were 3,800 participants in the Tournament. In closing it was a great experience and I enjoyed the opportunity.

Respectfully, Charles Corley





PVA Florida Clubhouse Birthdays

PVAF, Improving the Lives of Those with Spinal Cord Injury and Disease

April Birthday

Noel W. BurnsApril 02
 Edward GayApril 03
 Eliseo A. DeMorizi.....April 04
 Leo E. MyzickApril 04
 William E. OwensApril 05
 Julia A. TorresApril 06
 Randall T. DeraisApril 07
 Rickey W. JohnsonApril 08
 Henry McDuffieApril 09
 Donald R. ThomasApril 09
 Thomas J. FranklinApril 12
 Francis WenkeApril 12

Walter L. BembryApril 13
 Carl D. DomeniciApril 13
 Gregory M. RiskoApril 15
 Jesus M. SanchezApril 15
 Isabel P. SaavedraApril 17
 Salvatore AlbaniApril 18
 Morton BinderApril 18
 John E. EngelApril 18
 Lawrence C. Holland ..April 18
 George V. WarrenApril 18
 Benjamin F. BowersApril 19
 Lorene PriceApril 19
 Edward A. QuintoApril 19

Anthony C. SmithApril 20
 Brad W. CottonApril 21
 Lawrence R. Hawkins ..April 21
 Richard A. RainesApril 21
 Harvey T. HorvitzApril 23
 Anita MillerApril 23
 Jean AugustinApril 26
 Robert BibeauApril 26
 Jason PicaroApril 26
 Thomas W. OhlsonApril 28
 Edward ToroApril 29



Urinary Incontinence

Yira M Rojas MSN

NURSING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Evaluation of Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms

What is Urinary Incontinence? Urinary incontinence is the leaking of urine from the bladder which is a prevalent condition among MS patients. Bladder dysfunctions are caused by demyelination which blocks or delays the brain signals to control the bladder muscle (MS Today, 2024). Nearly 90% of MS patients experience some degree of voiding dysfunction. There are many patients who do not tell their provider what is happening, therefore, it's very important to share with your doctor any problems with storage and emptying your bladder. When a provider is aware, they take careful consideration about urinary incontinence and look at warning sign, disease progression, comorbidities, physical status, and medications. In Evaluation of lower urinary tract symptoms in multiple sclerosis, Dr. Aharony states that a basic assessment includes detailed history-taking, physical examination, and post-void residual volume measurement, which is some amongst the few. Dr. Aharony also notes that advanced evaluation consists of imaging and specific testing, with pivotal importance on urodynamic studies. In his article Dr. Aharony, Dr. Ornella and Dr. Corcos mention that lower urinary track symptoms (LUTS) usually appear 6-8 years after the initial diagnosis which may be affected by gender for example, men with MS have a higher prevalence of voiding symptoms and complication, especially after age 50 (Aharony Ornella, Corcos , 2017). As patients we should take into consideration, that as we get older, the progression of the disease may change or evolve. It is always best to contact your provider with anything that is new or different.

Dr. Aharony and his team address that although urological symptoms at first presentation of MS are rare (3-10%), almost two-thirds of MS patients will suffer from moderate to severe urinary disturbances related to their disease and can result in significant morbidity and impairment of their quality of life (Aharony Ornella, Corcos , 2017). if newly diagnose with MS, the basic evaluation is tailored for every patient taking into consideration they symptoms, length of disease, physical status and any medications the veteran is taking. The history exam may consist of urgency, frequency, incontinence, hesitancy, retention, nocturia in comparison to the motor and sensory dysfunctions of the lower extremities, pelvic, sacral dermatomes and other assessments to help diagnose and predict prognosis. Seeking evaluation, the moment a new change is noted, will help the Veteran manage and set a new goal to improve quality of life. If you notice changes like urgency, frequency of urination, hesitancy, incontinence or inability to empty the bladder completely, make an appointment right away.

Reference

Evaluation of lower urinary tract symptoms in multiple sclerosis (2025). Retrieved on March 15, 2025, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5403674/>.

Reference: Urology Care Foundation
MS Today 2025

NSO Report

By Raul Acosta

THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA 2025 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION IS NOW OPEN!

Apply here by May 15, 2025, at 11:59pm EST.

We want to invest in you and your higher education!

Paralyzed Veterans of America is proud to offer funds to PVA members and their immediate family members through our Educational Scholarship Program.

We will award scholarships in the amount of **\$2,500 to full-time students and \$1,000 to part-time students.**

Eligibility

- A PVA member, spouse, or unmarried child (under 24 years of age) who is dependent (as defined by the IRS) on the member for principal support.
- A citizen of the United States.
- Accepted and enrolled as a full-time or part-time student in an accredited U.S. college or university.

Please Note: Previous award recipients may apply but are limited to a total of two scholarships per lifetime.

Questions? Contact members@pva.org

2025 Scholarship Awarding Timeline

March 1-May 15 at 11:59 p.m.: Scholarship application is open.

May 16-30: Review period.

June 26: Award winners will be notified. All applicants who were not awarded a scholarship will be contacted by the end of June.

National Wheeled Mobility Repair Contract

Once you click on the link you will see veterans can call the toll-free number 7 days a week from 8 AM to 6 PM EST to schedule repairs. In addition, if you select "New Repair Request" you will see it is also relatively easy to schedule repairs Online. This information is also being disseminated to veterans by VISNs and VAMCs.

- Ensure Veterans maintain their functional independence and active lifestyles via timely repairs of wheeled mobility devices
- Veteran Centric: Veteran Initiated and controlled system
- Reduce wait times for repair initiation and completion
- Dedicated customer service center for repairs
- Toll Free Phone Number as well as Website for new repair request
- Veteran direct access to repair notification and initiation
- Repair tracking and status updates
- Setting and monitoring response times

Calendar Post in the form of the lobby for updates and activates

News Round-Up

Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.

Written and produced by Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department

CONGRESS PASSES FULL-YEAR CR FOR FY 2025

WOn March 14, President Trump signed the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (H.R. 1968). This law funds the federal government through September 30. The continuing resolution (CR) includes an additional \$6 billion for the VA's Toxic Exposure Fund (TEF) to address the shortfall for VA health care for fiscal year (FY) 2025. However, the CR cuts \$800 million from VA facility construction. In addition, the law cuts \$859 million from the Department of Defense budget for the congressionally-directed medical research program, which will affect research related to spinal cord injuries and disorders, such as MS and ALS.

Although the bill includes VA's advance appropriation for FY 2026, the bill did not include \$22.8 billion in funding for the TEF. This sets up a potential shortfall in VA's health care accounts in FY 2026. PVA will continue to closely monitor VA funding to highlight any deficiencies in funding for programs and services focused on paralyzed veterans.

PVA NATIONAL PRESIDENT ROBERT THOMAS, JR. TESTIFIES BEFORE CONGRESS

On March 4, PVA National President Robert Thomas, Jr. testified before a joint session of the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees regarding PVA's public policy priorities. President Thomas stressed the importance of restoring VA's specialized care services, which are in dire need of adequate funding and staffing, and the vital role that VA-provided care and life-sustaining research play in the lives of PVA members. He also unveiled PVA's 2025 Policy Priorities, which will guide our advocacy efforts throughout the year. The two-panel hearing lasted nearly three hours. You can watch a recording of the hearing [here](#). President Thomas's oral statement begins at the 1:59:00 mark. His full written statement is located [here](#).

While in Washington, D.C., President Thomas and other members of PVA's Executive Committee met with Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Ranking Member Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost (R-IL) and Ranking Member Mark Takano (D-CA). During their visits, PVA leaders expressed concerns about the status of the VA's spinal cord injuries and disorders system of care and the effects of current efforts to reduce the size of the federal government. PVA leaders also discussed the importance of long-term services and supports for veterans with catastrophic disabilities and the need for Congress to ensure proper implementation of the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act (P.L. 118-210).

On March 6, President Thomas, National Treasurer Tom Wheaton, and National Vice President Anne Robinson attended an event officially unveiling Capitol Hill's first accessible drop off/pick up zone on the House side. PVA's role in the creation of the zone was reiterated during the curb-side briefing that included Committee on House Administration Chairman Bryan Steil (R-WI), Ranking Member Joseph Morelle (D-NY), Subcommittee on Modernization Chairwoman Stephanie Bice (R-OK), Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), and leaders from the office of the Architect of the Capitol. CEO Carl Blake also participated in the event.

EO SUBCOMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON PENDING LEGISLATION

The Economic Opportunity (EO) Subcommittee for the House Veterans' Affairs Committee held a pending legislation hearing on March 11. Julie Howell, Associate Legislative Director, testified on behalf of PVA.

The bills discussed encompassed several pieces of legislation related to VA education benefits and the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program, as well as H.R. 1364, the Automotive Support Services to Improve Safe Transportation (ASSIST) Act, which was the biggest priority bill for PVA. The legislation was introduced by Rep. Tom Barrett (R-MI) and Rep. Maggie Goodlander (D-NH).

The ASSIST Act provides a technical fix to the Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-333), which allowed catastrophically disabled veterans to receive an additional auto grant and codified certain vehicle adaptations. The ASSIST Act will address issues related to VA approving necessary adaptations for veterans as part of the medical benefits package.

Classified Ads

Spokesman classified section is provided at no cost to PVA Florida Chapter members. Please call Juan Perez by the first of the month prior to publication if you would like to advertise with us: (954) 565-8885.

If you are interested in ensuring quality health care, wheelchair sports, recreation, advocacy, ADA education and helping to improve the lives of those with SCI/D call today to Become a PVA Florida Chapter Associate Member! (954) 565-8885



Florida Chapter

STAY INFORMED

Email is the fastest way for Paralyzed Veterans to communicate with its members.

DON'T MISS:

Latest News • Event Calendars • Special Offers • More

NEW! Make sure your contact information is current, so you receive the new monthly membership e-newsletter. You'll be the first to hear about events and other updates relevant to our members.

To Update Your Information:
800-424-5200, ext. 775 or 776
memberupdate@pva.org

For Information:
Orinell Hillman
202-416-7776
OrinellH@pva.org

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News Round-Up

*Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.
Written and produced by Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department*

You can watch the hearing [here](#). If you would like to express your support for the ASSIST Act, you can sign our PVAAction Force alert [here](#).

HOUSE COMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON WIOA

On March 5, the House Education and Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development held a hearing titled, "Strengthening WIOA (Work Innovation and Opportunity Act): Improving Outcomes for America's Workforce." Last Congress, there was broad bipartisan support for the reauthorization of WIOA, which provides career services to individuals looking to return to the workforce, or who are seeking additional training for new employment. While the reauthorization did not pass, efforts are continuing in this Congress to make improvements to WIOA.

The subcommittee discussed the need for improved data and transparency, how artificial intelligence might impact the labor market and overall workforce, and the need to make improvements around coordination with providers and local education providers.

You can watch the hearing [here](#).

SVAC HOLDS LEGISLATIVE HEARING

On March 11, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee (SVAC) conducted a committee hearing to consider 15 pending pieces of legislation, including the PVA-supported Caring for Survivors Act (S. 611), Improving Veteran Access to Care Act (S. 601), Ensuring VetSuccess on Campus Act (S. 610), and the Love Lives on Act (S. 410). PVA submitted a statement for the record. Representatives from the VA, The American Legion, the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars testified during the hearing. To watch the hearing, please [click here](#).

HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE HOLDS LEGISLATIVE HEARING

On March 11, the Health Subcommittee of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee held a hearing on pending legislation. PVA submitted a statement for the record. The hearing addressed several pieces of health-related legislation, including the draft bill, the Veterans Supporting Prosthetics Opportunities and Recreational Therapy (SPORT) Act, which would add "adaptive prostheses and terminal devices for sports and other recreational activities" to the statute governing which equipment and aids that the VA is allowed to grant veterans.

Also included in the hearing was H.R. 217, the Communities Helping Invest through Property and Improvements Needed or CHIP IN for Veterans Act.

The Communities Helping Invest through Property and Improvements Needed for Veterans Act of 2016 (P.L. 114-294), often referred to as the "CHIP IN" Act, authorized the VA to carry out a pilot program under which it may accept up to five donations from nonfederal entities of existing facilities, land, or a facility to be constructed by the donor on real property of the VA. Increasing investment in VA's infrastructure, particularly facilities that support specialized health care services, is a crucial priority for paralyzed veterans. PVA supports this bill, which would make the CHIP IN pilot program permanent, thus, increasing the availability of health care services to veterans.

You can watch the hearing [here](#).

INTRODUCTION OF THE JUSTICE FOR ALS VETERANS ACT

On February 26, Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) reintroduced the Justice for ALS Veterans Act in the Senate and the next day Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Co-Chair of the ALS Caucus, reintroduced the bill in the House of Representatives. Veterans are twice as likely to develop ALS compared to the general population, leading it to be a presumptive condition for all veterans regardless of where they served.

Under current law, survivors of veterans who had a disability rating of 100 percent for at least eight continuous years be-

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fore death receive an additional monthly stipend from the VA. However, with an average life expectancy of only three to five years after diagnosis, ALS veterans often do not survive long enough to meet this requirement—leaving their families without this crucial benefit.

The Justice for ALS Veterans Act (H.R. 1685/ S. 749) would eliminate this unfair restriction and ensure that all families of veterans who pass away from ALS receive this financial support, regardless of the duration of the veterans' illness. To read more about this bill, please click [here](#). If you would like to express your support for the legislation, you can sign our PVAAction Force alert [here](#).

NEWS OF NOTE

Bipartisan Credit for Caring Act Introduced

On March 11, Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) reintroduced the PVA-supported Credit for Caring Act (H.R. 2036/S. 925). This bill would provide eligible and working family caregivers with a federal, non-refundable tax credit for up to \$5,000. The bill would also apply to family caregiving expenses greater than \$2,000. Examples of caregiving-related expenses include home modifications, respite care, home care aides, and adult day care. Family caregivers of all ages, regardless of whether they live with their care recipient, could be eligible for the tax credit.

Voting Rights Advancement Act Reintroduced

On March 5, Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL) reintroduced the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 14). This bill would establish a framework to determine which states and localities have had a recent history of discrimination. Those states and localities would then be required to pre-clear new voting laws with the Department of Justice. PVA supports the passage of this bill.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit Act Re-introduced

On February 10, Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH) reintroduced the Opportunity Tax Credit Act. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit available to employers who hire and employ individuals from groups that have faced significant barriers to employment. Among other things, this bill would update the WOTC, increase the current credit percentage from 40 percent to 60 percent of qualified wages, and add a second level of credit for employees who work 400 or more hours.

DOL Secretary Confirmed

Former Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer has been confirmed by the Senate to be the Secretary for the Department of Labor (DOL). Secretary Chavez-DeRemer will oversee the department which is home to DOL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS). DOLVETS has a particular mission dedicated to veteran employment.

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS, SURVEYS, & COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Invitation to Participate in University of Illinois at Chicago Research Study on Air Travel and People with Disabilities

Are you a person with a spinal cord injury who has experience traveling by air? If you are 18 years old or older, you are invited to take part in a University of Illinois at Chicago research study to better understand your air travel experiences, accessibility needs, and barriers to safe and accessible travel. This knowledge will be used to create recommendations for airline and airport personnel training, as well as information resources to facilitate a safe and pleasant travel experience. Your participation would require taking part in a 60-minute interview via phone or a teleconferencing platform (Zoom). You will be compensated \$50 for your time. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact the research assistant for this project at accesstofly@uic.edu.

PVA Needs You - Sign Today!

Over the last couple of years, we have seen VA health care staffing shortages, a lack of investment in infrastructure, and an overall growing trend towards care in the community. In light of our ongoing concerns about changes at the VA, we

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created an online petition to quantify the need to improve funding and support of the VA's spinal cord injuries and disorders system of care. Over 2,500 individuals have already signed the petition. [Click here to sign your name and show your support.](#) We need veterans, caregivers, and supporters to sign!

Please also take a look at our 2025 PVA Policy Priorities and the issues important to our members. If you are interested in more ways to extend your advocacy efforts, [click here to view our current campaigns on bills we support on our advocacy platform, PVAAction Force.](#) We continue to add more campaigns as additional bills are introduced.

REMINDER: Survey to Assess Accessibility During the 2024 General Election

PVA National is conducting a survey on accessible voting. The study aims to learn more about the voting experience of people with disabilities in the 2024 general election. The feedback received from this survey will inform our advocacy on how to educate members as they face accessibility barriers in voting. This information will provide valuable insight and guide preparation for future webinars and other resources related to voting accessibility. To take the survey, please [click here](#).

Veterans' Committee Activities

Please visit the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee webpages for information on previous and upcoming hearings and markups.

Introduction of Jessica Romeo

Hello PVA Florida Chapter Members,

I am grateful to have the opportunity to introduce myself and become more connected with such a dedicated and inspiring community. My name is Jessica and I will be serving as Administrator at our Oakland Park office.

I bring 10 years of experience in administration - my career started as an administrator at a laboratory that did testing for drug and rehab centers. My family and I have always been deeply committed to supporting our community and making a difference where we can. My father is a police chaplain, and I have helped him for over 10 years with his church ministry - visiting hospitals, fundraising, planning events, fostering our community, and helping to support each other...

I look forward to contributing to our shared mission, working alongside you all and assisting you where I can. Thank you for welcoming me into the PVA Florida Chapter family! Thank you for your service!



Warm Regards,
Jessica Romeo
Admin

Sports and Recreation Funding & Requirements

Hello Florida Chapter Members,

There have been a lot of questions about funding for sports and recreational opportunities, so would like to take a moment and explain the policies we currently are using.

Each Florida Chapter member can apply for a \$1500 grant that can be used towards is sporting or recreational opportunity of your choice. These funds can be used towards registration fees, travel costs or hotels, and it can be used all at once or you can divide it out between events. Once you have exhausted the funds, that will be no more available for the rest of the fiscal year.

We are sponsoring individuals only at this time, not whole team events, as we will work that into the budget for the next fiscal year.

Using this grant does not prevent you from being eligible to attend the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

If there is an event that you would like to attend, fill out the sports and recreation funding request form (available from the office or website) and turn it in at least 30 days prior to the event, but no later than 2 weeks prior so that the Board of Directors will be able to approve the request, but that also travel costs might be obtained at lower fees.

Airline and hotel reservations that are needed will be coordinated and paid for through the Florida Chapter Office.

This funding process will continue through the fiscal year, ending on September 30, 2025. Starting October 1, 2025, the Volunteer Points System to obtain sports and recreation funding will go into effect. More information about this will be coming soon.

If you have any questions, please reach out and let us know.



PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA FLORIDA CHAPTER

Sports and Recreational Event Application

The Paralyzed Veterans of America Florida Chapter, wants to encourage its members and other person with disabilities in this region to participate in wheelchair sports activities or recreational program. If approved, PVA Florida Chapter will financially assist In Funding Up to \$1500 to be used for expenses to participate in a sports event or recreational activity described in this application. This amount can be divided up between multiple events, but only to the maximum amount of \$1500 for fiscal year 2025. All travel arrangements will be made and paid through the chapter.

By signing this application, the participant agrees to participate in sport events or recreational activity, which will directly benefit the spinal cord injured veterans or other persons with disabilities. If the funds are not used, they will be immediately returned back to the Florida Chapter. If you request funding and the chapter has paid for the arrangements and you fail to attend, you might be liable to repay the chapter depending on the circumstances of the failure to attend.

The participant will provide the information requested on page two of this application at least 30 days prior and no later than 2 weeks before the event so that it can be considered and submitted for approval by the Board Of Directors.

PLEASE PRINT:

DATE OF APPLICATION

NAME

TELEPHONE NUMBER

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

SIGNATURE

The above named, applicant must meet the eligibility requirements for a PVA Florida Chapter Sport Director.

DATE APPROVED

DATE DISAPPROVED

AMOUNT APPROVED

SPORTS DIRECTOR

DETAILS OF EVENT OR ACTIVITY

Please type or print:

Date: From _____ To: _____

PLACE _____

Brief Description of events or activity:

Estimated Cost for:

Loading: \$ _____

Travel: \$ _____

Fly: \$ _____

Other: \$ _____

Total Estimated Cost: \$ _____

Amount Requesting: \$ _____

Amount Approved: \$ _____

Authorized by _____ DATE: _____



On Location

Florida Chapter

SUPER BOWL 2025 AT MIAMI VA





On Location

Florida Chapter

MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT SHAKE A LEG





CHARITY EVENT



Florida Chapter



PRESENTS OUR 2025 **GOLF** TOURNAMENT SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2025

Shotgun Start - 1:00 PM

COME JOIN US!

Get a foursome together or just come out on your own. Either way you won't want to miss out on a fun day of golf for such terrific cause.

Contact Linda Brown-Doriot, Golf Tournament Coordinator for assistance at 954-288-7201

Woodmont Country Club, 7801 N.W. 80th Ave., Tamarac, FL - 954-722-4300

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Sponsorship, Foursome and Individual Golfers Packages available.

- \$150 individual Golfers or
- \$540 for a Golf Foursome
- Dinner Only - \$50 Non-Golfers

CALL 954-288-7201
REGISTER ONLINE
www.pvaflorida.org

The Paralyzed Veterans of America Florida Chapter is excited about our Annual Golf Classic. This fund-raiser has been developed to support the programs of the PVA. Please join us in improving the lives of those with spinal cord injury or dysfunction





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National Veterans Wheelchair Games

REGISTRATION FOR THE NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES IS OPEN!

If you are interested in participating, please get registered and let the Florida Chapter Office know as soon as possible.

44TH ANNUAL

NATIONAL VETERANS
**WHEELCHAIR
GAMES**

3 REASONS TO REGISTER

- GET ACTIVE
- CRUSH GOALS
- BUILD CONFIDENCE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: 

CO-PRESENTED BY:



Florida Chapter

Paralyzed Veterans of America Florida Chapter
3799 North Andrews Ave.
Oakland Park, FL 33309

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