

Dear Madam or Sir,

On Veterans Day, we honor the brave men and women who served our country. Our Armed Forces risk their lives to protect our freedoms and keep us safe. It is our duty to ensure that they and their loved ones receive the services and care they were promised and deserve.

For service members returning home, navigating the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DoD) can be a daunting process. My office is here to assist by connecting service members and their families with Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) who can help you through the process and make sure your applications and filings have been received. We have been successful in assisting some of the [nearly 30,000 veterans in our district](#) who had issues with VA/DoD benefits. We encourage veterans to visit <https://panetta.house.gov/military-and-veterans> or call our Salinas district office at 831-424-2229 if they need any assistance.

When it comes to issues impacting veterans, Congress is working in a bipartisan manner. This year, many bills have been voted on and passed by Congress and signed into law. These bills include: the [Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017](#), which will reform and speed up the appeals process on disability ratings at the VA; and the [Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017](#), which will make it easier for the VA to remove employees for misconduct while better protecting staffers who bring wrongdoing to light; and the [VA Choice and Quality Employment Act of 2017](#), which allows veterans to seek health care outside of the VA, and also allows the VA to open 28 new clinics and implement new hiring programs.

I am honored to have worked on many bills that support our veterans and active duty service-members. I introduced a bipartisan bill with fellow freshman Congressman Neal Dunn (R-Fla) that [would expand opportunities for veteran-owned small business](#) to contract with the federal government, and I am an original cosponsor of the bipartisan [Gold Star Family Support Act](#), which would give Gold Star Families access to access to military installations' services and benefits, regardless of remarriage. I also cosponsored two bills that recently became law: the ["Forever GI" bill](#), which will allow military veterans to pursue educational opportunities for life, and the [Global War on Terrorism War Memorial Act](#), which will allow for construction of a memorial commemorating the Global War on Terror on our National Mall.

I look forward to working with both the veterans in our community and with fellow members in the House of Representatives to improve the lives of those who have served. As a veteran, and as your representative in the United States Congress, I am committed to ensuring that veterans and all constituents have access to the critical services provided by the federal government.

On this Veterans Day, I thank all of our veterans and their families for their service to our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Panetta', with a horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JIMMY PANETTA
Member of Congress