



# Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America

*Chartered By an Act of Congress*

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**Dr. Robert E. Pickard, COL (USA Retired)**

*National Commander*

January 24, 2014

The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chairman  
Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee  
412 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Our sincere thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership in crafting and introducing S. 1950, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

This massive omnibus bill, unprecedented in our modern experience, would create, expand, advance, and extend a number of VA benefits, services and programs that are important to the Jewish War Veterans and to our members. For example, responding to a call from JWV as a leading veteran's organization, it would create a comprehensive family caregiver support program for all generations of severely wounded, injured and ill veterans. Also, the bill would authorize advance appropriations for VA's mandatory accounts to ensure that in any government shutdown environment in the future, veteran's benefits payments would not be delayed or put in jeopardy. This measure also would provide additional financial support to survivors of service members who die in the line of duty, as well as expanded access for them to GI Bill educational benefits. A two-plus year stalemate in VA's authority to lease facilities for health care treatment and other purposes would be solved by this bill. These are but a few of the myriad provisions of this bill that would improve the lives and health of veterans—especially the wounded, injured and ill—and their loved ones.

JWV strongly supports the provisions in section 801 that would fully restore the cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for all Military Retirees, which were cut by the recently passed Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. The JWV believes these cuts constituted an egregious breach of the longstanding moral contract between this great nation and the brave men and women willing to die for her. Further, we strongly believe the message it sends to future potential recruits threatens the very foundation of the highly successful all-volunteer force. Section 801 of S.1950 fixes this.

On behalf of our membership, I want to sincerely thank you again for S.1950 and urge that it be adopted on a broad bi-partisan basis, as soon as possible.

Dr. Robert E. Pickard, COL (USA Retired)  
National Commander