



January 21 , 2014

The Honorable Bernie Sanders  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs  
412 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders:

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) is pleased to offer our support for the *Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014*, a wide-ranging package of legislation that seeks to improve the lives of veterans and their families by enhancing numerous benefits, programs, and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

This legislation would accomplish many of the goals for which veterans and military service organizations have been advocating for years, including strengthening the Post-9/11 GI Bill, expanding advance appropriations for more of the VA's budget, expanding dental care coverage for veterans, expanding benefits for surviving spouses, expanding care related to military sexual trauma, instituting new rules for VA's claims processing reports, and much more.

This bill also fully repeals the one percent cut to the annual Cost of Living Adjustment increase in the pensions of working-age military retirees, thus ensuring that America's budget is not balanced on the backs of its veterans. This cut to veterans' earned benefits was wrong, misguided, and a breach of faith with those who have sacrificed and continue to sacrifice the most for this country, and fixing this error is simply the right thing to do.

IAVA believes that veterans deserve the best care and benefits our country can offer. We are proud to offer our assistance and thank you for this meaningful legislation. If we can be of help, please contact Nick McCormick, IAVA's Legislative Associate, at (202) 544-7692 or [nickm@iava.org](mailto:nickm@iava.org).

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul Rieckhoff", is written over a light-colored background.

Paul Rieckhoff  
Chief Executive Officer and Founder  
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)