



NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS

333 ½ Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

Washington, DC 20003-1148

202-546-1969 / 800-VET-HELP

Website: www.nchv.org Email: info@nchv.org

January 31, 2014

Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) is writing to express its support for the “Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.”

Several of the provisions contained within the bill would positively affect the lives of homeless veterans and help them regain their footing on the pathway back to full health. For instance, by expanding access to healthcare across the more rural areas of the country, this bill would connect more homeless veterans with the care system necessary to support their transition out of homelessness.

Furthermore, the bill would allow for the expansion of the Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD) at State Homes across the country with under-utilized resources. Any expansion of this program means fewer homeless veterans will remain unsheltered year-round – a need that was amplified by the recent cold spell that gripped much of the nation. And it is not just an expansion of the GPD program this bill provides for, but also for the safety of those who live at those programs by ensuring strict adherence to a set of clear fire safety codes.

Finally, this bill provides for an extension and reauthorization of the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP), which provides job training for middle-aged, unemployed veterans. Despite evidence that the country may be recovering from years of economic uncertainty, unemployment remains a stubborn issue and one that often is directly linked with homelessness. Continuing this successful program and retraining our veterans for re-employment is a key preventive measure in the campaign to end veteran homelessness.

For these reasons and more, NCHV fully supports the passage of your bill, and would like to thank you for your unwavering support of our nation’s homeless veterans.

Sincerely,

John Driscoll
President and CEO
National Coalition for Homeless Veterans

Joshua Stewart
Policy and Communications Assistant
National Coalition for Homeless Veterans