

New Mexico Legislature's Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee Presentation on New Mexico Veteran Transition Services



Lt Colonel (R) Rudy C De Baca

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Overview

- Introduction
- Background
- Issues
- Objective
- Call to Action
- Fact Finding/
Data Gathering Option
- Potential Solutions Option
- Questions?



Introduction

- Personal Backstory
- Why I got involved as a VRC
- How issues were encountered



Background



Objectives

- Ascertain the issues with Veteran and Dependent (V&D) Services and Support.
- Discuss potential opportunities for improvement that can be identified in Legislation for the 2020 Legislative Session.

Call to Action

- Two possible courses of action to work from
 1. Fact finding and Data Gathering OR,
 2. Consider possible solutions exclusive of this

Fact Finding/Data Gathering Option

- Gather data on number of Veterans and Dependents receiving: 1. VA benefits, 2. State benefits.
- Identify all VA, State, Veterans Service Organizations.
- Identify all the Veterans Service Officers/
Representatives/Resource Centers/etc.

Fact Finding/Data Gathering Option (cont.)

- Request mission statements/expectations for each organization.
- Identify the following specifically of VA, State, and VSOs.
 1. How many V&D they support monthly and annually?
 2. How many V&D are waitlisted for support?
 3. Explain their process, i.e. Veterans disability claim consistency.
 4. What is the process time for each V&D benefit, i.e. “how long does it take to process a Veteran’s disability claim from the moment they the initial intake is started until the moment when a Veteran receives approval or disapproval.
 5. How many V&D are 1. Approved, 2. Disapproved (with reasons).

Potential Solutions Option

1. Fund and resource more State Veterans Service Officers.

- Look at funding a VSO at every American Legion, VFW, DAV post and Veterans Resource Center in the state; this enables each post to become “force multipliers” for the state and begin the process for submission of V&D claims.
- Institutionalize a state process for conduct, formality, and continuity.

Potential Solutions Option (cont.)

2. Codify a reasonable time table for claims process.

For example: all claims will be submitted and approved within a year.

Potential Solutions Options (cont.)

3. Approve an automatic temporary Post Traumatic Stress disability percentage for NM Veterans who demonstrate they were in a combat zone; this will enable these Veterans to receive immediate mental and medical support until a permanent disability claim is finalized.

Potential Solutions Options (cont.)

- Approve an automatic temporary Military Sexual Trauma disability percentage for NM Veterans who claim they were assaulted.

This will enable these Veterans to receive immediate mental and medical support until a permanent disability claim is finalized.

Potential Solutions Option (cont.)

- Look at establishing a Veterans Center of Excellence.
This will be a campus where Veterans can go for retreats, training, counseling, recreation, etc.

Potential Solutions Option (cont.)

- Permanently fund the State's Veterans Resource Centers:
UNM, NMSU, ENMU, WNMU, CNM, NNMC, UNM-T,
UNM-LA, etc.

Questions?