



THANK YOU
FOR SERVING OUR
COUNTRY AND
PROTECTING
OUR FREEDOMS!

Dear Friends,

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of our brave veterans for your loyal commitment to our country and welcome you home to Michigan. Your intangible bravery and service should never go unnoticed.

My colleagues and I in the Michigan House of Representatives are honored to fight for the rights and benefits you deserve upon re-entry into the civilian world. Since my time in the Legislature, we have pursued a variety of reforms to ensure you the proper benefits. It is my privilege to share the efforts we have made in Lansing in your honor.

I hope you find this information helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



State Representative
DAVE PAGEL
House District 78



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**HONORING ALL
WHO SERVED**



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SPRING 2014



**VETERANS
UPDATE**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DAVE PAGEL

HONOR ★ COURAGE ★ SACRIFICE

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Serving our veterans who sacrificed

Servicemen and women face many challenging issues when returning to civilian life. To help better the lives of our disabled veterans my colleagues and I passed several pieces of legislation. The bills established the following:

- Exempt permanently disabled, recipient of assistance, or unemployable veterans from homestead taxations. (Public Act 161 of 2013)
- Veteran Treatment Courts utilized to help keep veterans on track. The courts monitor each individual's progress throughout the program to ensure full recovery. (Public Act 335 of 2012)
- Free fishing and hunting licenses for disabled veterans. (Public Act 339 of 2012)

Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency

Last year, Governor Snyder created the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency to better serve our brave servicemen and women. The agency serves as a central coordinating point, connecting our service members and families to the benefits throughout the state of Michigan. Additionally, the MVAA controls and operates the

Recognizing those who served

Veterans face many hurdles upon re-entering civilian life. So, I have been working in partnership with my colleagues to relieve these hurdles. Starting May 1, 2014, veterans can apply for a special designation on their driver's licenses and state identification cards to help eliminate the burdens. The veteran designation will ensure veterans can be easily identified, giving them easier access to jobs and opportunities in our state. I look forward to this law taking effect, for the honor and respect of our brave men and women who served our country.

Easing the transition into civilian life

My colleagues and I are aware of the variety of talents servicemen and women acquire in the Armed Forces. Unfortunately, we also understand the challenges many veterans face when translating military experience into the civilian workforce. This is why we passed a series of legislation waiving certain occupational licensing regulations. Under these new reforms veterans may be eligible for a licensing waiver in the following fields:

- Emergency medical technician (HB 4605)
- Firefighter operations (HB 4731)
- Boiler operating or stationary engineering (HB 4752)
- Mechanical contracting (HB 4754)
- Residential building and maintenance, alteration contracting (HB 4756)

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, Michigan Veterans Homeowners Assistance Program, veterans' homes, constituent services and state grants catered to veterans' service organizations. Visit their website at, www.michiganveterans.com or contact them via phone, 517-284-5298.

CREATING MORE ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

A good education is important for all Michiganders. In previous years, you may have found it difficult to return to school upon re-entry into the civilian world; however, times have changed and a good education is now at your fingertips. Veterans may seek eligibility for in-state tuition at various public universities in Michigan, under qualified circumstances. Furthermore, veterans are able to submit their military transcripts for potential college credit. We are working to pass legislation which requires community colleges to inform applicants of this benefit, as it often goes unknown. Education is becoming more readily available; I encourage you to utilize your benefits and enroll today!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT VETERANS BENEFITS

Q. WHAT QUALIFIES A VETERAN FOR BENEFITS?

A. The veteran qualification process depends on a variety of factors including length of service, where and when the veteran served and the characterization of discharge. An accredited veterans' service officer can help you determine your potential benefits.

Q. WHAT MEDICAL BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE?

A. Veterans are eligible for a full spectrum of health-care services. Benefits include, but are not limited to, health-care services for inpatient and outpatient, pharmacy, dental care and many others. You can visit the VA's Health Benefits Explorer at www.va.gov/healthbenefits to determine your level of eligibility.

Q. ARE SPOUSES OR DEPENDENTS OF VETERANS ELIGIBLE FOR ANY BENEFITS?

A. Spouses may be eligible for benefits through the VA and further, a veteran may transfer his or her GI bill benefits. In addition, primary caregivers of post-9/11 veterans may be eligible for beneficial services.

Q. WHAT BURIAL BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO VETS AND THEIR SPOUSES?

A. Other than those dishonorably discharged, all veterans and their spouses are eligible for burial in a national cemetery. There also are burial allowances for wartime veterans, low-income veterans, and those drawing veteran pensions or compensation.

Q. WHAT FINANCIAL BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO VETERANS OR THEIR SPOUSES?

A. There are many financial benefits available to veterans and their families. These benefits include, but are not limited to, educational benefits, VA home loans, disability compensation, health-care benefits and others.

Please contact the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency for more information by visiting www.michiganveterans.com or calling **517-284-5298**.