



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES

2015 Annual Report  
Of the  
CCD Veterans and Military Families Task Force

The Veterans and Military Families Task Force continued to follow legislation and hearings of concern to veterans and military family members with disabilities through regular updates of the activities of the House and Senate Veterans Committees. Throughout the year, the task force heard a variety of presentations on a diverse range of issues including:

- Proposed regulations governing needs based benefits such as the VA pension program
- Participation of the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Education program in the Curb Cuts to the Middle Class Initiative
- Efforts to enhance and expand the VA Caregiver program
- Bureau of Labor Statistics' collection and analysis of data on employment of veterans and veterans with disabilities
- Veterans Economic Communities Initiative
- Community supports for women veterans
- Proposed changes to military health care programs for family members with disabilities

The task force strives to serve as a bridge to the broader veterans and military service organization community. In keeping with that effort, the task force conducted one of its periodic roundtables featuring representatives from the National Disability Rights Network to outline the work of the protection and advocacy system in serving veterans with disabilities and their families. The task force also seeks to educate the disability community about VA benefits and programs serving veterans with disabilities and their families. To that end, the task force provided an opportunity for task force members to learn about benefits for veterans with service-connected disabilities by a representative from PVA's Veterans Benefits Department.

The ongoing implementation of the Section 503 and VEVRAA regulations were a particular focus of the task force, with representatives taking part in broader coalition meetings with officials from the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and its National Industry Liaison Group. In other employment related matters, the task force collaborated with other CCD task forces in submitting comments on proposed regulations for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and met with staff from the House VA Committee to discuss the VA vocational rehabilitation program and workforce programs operated by the Department of Labor.

The task force continued to work with other task forces in supporting legislation that would positively impact the lives of veterans and military family members with disabilities. In May, the cochairs joined with those for the Employment Task Force in a letter of support for extension of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. In June, the task force joined with the Health Task force to endorse the Toxic Exposure Research Act which seeks to fund projects examining the direct and long term effects of veterans' exposure to toxic chemicals and fumes. Late in the year, the task force joined with the Housing Task Force to support the Veterans Homebuyer Access Act which would provide a tax credit to veterans with disabilities and their families to make their homes accessible.

In 2016, the task force expects to continue following the activities of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee and monitoring federal agency efforts to promote economic self sufficiency for veterans with disabilities. The task force will continue to seek out ways to collaborate with other CCD task forces on cross-cutting issues that affect veterans with disabilities as people with disabilities.

Submitted by the cochairs:

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Ron Drach, National Organization on Disability  
Maynard Friesz, Easter Seals Inc.  
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