



PROTECT OUR MOST VULNERABLE VETERANS

Hundreds of thousands of disabled, senior citizen military veterans are depending on you right now



Already facing a suicide epidemic, we have every reason to believe more U.S. military veterans will die by suicide if a 2018 budget cut goes through as proposed by President Donald J. Trump's administration.

Panicked veterans need to hear a bipartisan message that this proposal is a non-starter

AMVETS National HQ has received thousands of emails, calls and messages over the past two weeks from veterans decrying the proposal to steal 225,000 Social Security eligible aged veterans the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' "Individual Unemployability" (IU) compensation program if they have paid into Social Security at any point during their life.

What is IU?

Individual Unemployability is a VA program for veterans who cannot work because of their service-connected disabilities. These veterans are rated below 100 percent per the VA rating schedule. But each recipient of IU has been through an exhaustive verification process to ensure they are unable to earn wages above federal poverty guidelines because of their wounds, injuries or illness.

Why would the President propose this?

Cutting this earned and needed benefit would "save" \$3.2 billion in 2018 and \$41 billion over the next decade, which is slated to go toward an expanded VA Choice program, which has yet to be fully developed. We feel if President Trump knew of the serious repercussions, he would have not included this in his budget request.

These veterans earned a lifetime disability benefit for their service to this nation. They did not ask to become disabled or to become unemployable as a result of their injuries or wounds. Our nation owes it to them to keep its promise, so they may continue to make ends meet.

What else would this affect?

If veterans lose their IU, it would trigger the loss of:

- CHAMPVA health benefits for spouses
- Chapter 35 Educational Benefits for the family
- Commissary privileges
- Property tax relief
- VA Dental & Vision Care
- Vehicle exemption fees

We firmly believe that if this measure of the budget passes, that it would put the lives of these veterans at serious risk. VA's most recent report on suicide notes that about 65% of all veterans who died from suicide were aged 50 years or older. VA also states on its website that among the warning signs to look out for in order to reach out and prevent suicide are hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out, anxiety, and agitation. Since this measure has been made public, we hear daily from veterans in desperation, and have a sincere concern for them.

What can you do?

You can reject this dangerous part of the President's budget. Please stand up for those who have stood up for this great nation. Every day those who would be affected are growing more distressed. They deserve to keep this earned benefit and live their senior years with some peace of mind knowing that the country they served is not deserting them in the time of their greatest need.