



JON'S BILLS

Signed into Law

THIS CONGRESS

Senator Jon Tester has worked with Republicans and Democrats to author and pass 11 bipartisan bills that have been signed into law this Congress.



Government Accountability Office Access and Oversight Act

After \$125 billion in improper federal payments was reported, this bipartisan bill aims to reduce fraud, waste and abuse by allowing the Government Accountability Office to audit key federal government programs and give them access to data about unemployment insurance and wage data.



VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act

This bipartisan bill allows the VA to quickly fire bad employees without sacrificing the due process rights of dedicated VA employees. It also provides incentives for managers to address poor performance and misconduct, strengthens protections for whistleblowers, and improves VA leadership through additional training.



Veterans Choice Program Improvement Act

The Veterans Choice Program allows veterans to get health care at private providers. While it was crafted with the best of intentions, there have been some issues in Montana with the rollout of the Program. This bipartisan bill will reduce out-of-pocket costs for veterans and ensure that providers are getting paid in a more timely manner.



VA Choice and Quality Employment Act

This legislation streamlines the hiring process for hard-to-fill positions and helps address crippling workforce shortages by increasing recruitment efforts for talented students and recent graduates to work at the VA. It also creates a VA-wide database for vacant and hard-to-fill positions, and expands a private-public sector partnership to foster innovation and better practices at the VA.



Harry W. Colmery Veterans Education Assistance Act

This bipartisan bill breaks down barriers to education and creates opportunities for Montana veterans, Reservists and their families. This bill removes the arbitrary 15-year time limit in which GI Bill benefits expire. It also allows Guardsmen and Reservists to count their training, deployments and medical treatment towards accruing education benefits, just like active duty service members. This legislation also honors the sacrifice of Purple Heart recipients by giving them full education benefits if their service was cut short by their injury.

U.S. SENATOR FOR MONTANA

JON TESTER



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Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act

This bipartisan bill streamlines the current disability benefits appeals process, creating three separate options so veterans can choose what works for them. It also establishes deadline goals for how quickly the VA can issue a final decision on an appeal. This means veterans aren't forced to wait for D.C. bureaucrats to decide what benefits they can and can't receive.



VA Expiring Authorities Act

This bipartisan bill funds 20 VA programs that help rural, disabled and homeless veterans access mental health care, make it to their doctor appointments on time and get back on their feet. The bill also includes provisions from Jon's Deborah Sampson Act, which provides more opportunities for women veterans to seek readjustment counselling at the VA.



Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act

This bipartisan bill increases disability and survivor benefits for veterans and their families to help them keep up with the rising cost of housing, utilities and food. Disabled veterans and Gold Star Families will receive these increased benefit starting 12/1/17.



John Olsen Toxic Exposure Declassification Act

Over 50 years ago, the military conducted top secret weapons testing on thousands of its own men. Billings veteran John Olsen was one of them. Olsen sought treatment for related ailments at the VA, but because his medical records were still classified, the VA denied Olsen care. This bill declassifies these records to get Olsen the medical care he deserves.



Fire Grants Reauthorization Act

This bipartisan bill reauthorizes two critical grant initiatives— Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) grants & Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants—that help rural fire departments across Montana and the country recruit, train, and equip firefighters.



The Alex Diekmann Peak Designation Act

This legislation designates an unnamed 9,765-foot peak the "Alex Diekmann Peak" to honor the life of a renowned Montana conservationist. The peak is in the Madison Range, 2.2 miles west-northwest of Finger Mountain on the western boundary of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness.

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