



# JON'S BILLS *Signed into Law* ----- THIS CONGRESS

*Senator Jon Tester has worked with Republicans and Democrats to author and pass 13 bipartisan bills that have been signed into law this Congress.*



## **Government Accountability Office Access and Oversight Act**

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 for Montana veterans, Reservists and their families by removing 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 education benefits, just like active duty service members.



## **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.

U.S. SENATOR FOR MONTANA

**JON TESTER**



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## **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.



## **Honoring Our Hometown Heroes Act**

This bill amends the U.S. flag code to allow the Governor of a state to order the American flag to be lowered to half-staff in the event that a local first responder dies while serving in the line of duty.



## **Improving Rural Call Completion Act**

This bipartisan bill requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish basic quality standards for intermediaries who transmit phone calls across the country. This will improve call completion in rural areas.

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