



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

*Jon has worked with Republicans and Democrats to author and pass 18 bipartisan bills that President Trump has signed into law this Congress.*

## 1) The VA MISSION Act

Despite its best intentions, the Choice Program hasn't worked for many Montana veterans. Jon has helped hundreds of these veterans navigate the bureaucracy and red tape, but one-off solutions were not enough—veterans needed wholesale change. So, Jon work directly with Montana veterans to draft a bill that scraps the Choice Program, strengthens the VA and uses the private sector to fill in the gaps.

## 2) The Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief & Consumer Protection Act

Built off years of tough bipartisan negotiations, this bill protects consumers and maintains strict limits on Wall Street while also providing commonsense regulatory relief to community banks and credit unions. These small local lenders are a significant source of capital in rural and underserved communities, enabling businesses to start and grow, offering farmers and ranchers loans, and helping families achieve the American Dream of homeownership. So, by cutting red tape and lightening their bureaucratic load, this bill will provide relief for Main Streets across rural America and help local economies grow.

## 3) East Rosebud Protection Act

In 1968, Congress passed the *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act* to preserve rivers with cultural and recreational value in their free-flowing condition for present and future generations. This bipartisan bill protects 20 miles of the East Rosebud in south-central Montana as part of the Wild and Scenic River System. Less than one-half of one percent of Montana's approximately 170,000 miles of river is designated as "wild and scenic."

## 4) Improving Rural Call Quality & Reliability 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.

## 5) GAO Access and Oversight Act

This bipartisan bill aims to reduce fraud, waste and abuse by allowing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to audit key federal government programs and access data about unemployment insurance and wages.

## 6) 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.

## 7) VA Accountability & 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.

## 8) 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.

U.S. SENATOR FOR MONTANA

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## 9) Veterans Appeals Improvement 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 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.

## 10) 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.

## 11) VA Choice 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 providers get paid in a more timely manner.

## 12) VA Choice & 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.

## 13) VA Expiring Authorities Act

This bipartisan bill funds 20 VA programs that help rural, disabled and homeless veterans access mental health care, get to their doctors appointments on time and get back on their feet. It also includes provisions from Jon's *Deborah Sampson Act*, increasing opportunities for women veterans to seek readjustment counseling at the VA.

## 14) Gibson Dam Completion Act

This bipartisan bill ensures the completion of the Gibson Dam Hydro Project near Augusta by authorizing a six-year extension of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license for the dam.

## 15) Veterans' Compensation 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.

## 16) 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.

## 17) 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.

## 18) VA Clinics Naming Act

This legislation recognizes the service and sacrifice of three distinguished Montana veterans by naming VA facilities in Missoula and Billings in honor of David J. Thatcher, Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow & Benjamin Charles Steele.

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