



HONOR *The* CONTRACT

 **VFW**
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

The following e-mail came directly from the VFW Washington, D.C. office.

Last year, the VFW launched the **Honor the Contract** campaign in response to the *Economist* article and the Congressional Budget Office's reckless proposals to cut veterans' benefits. That campaign reminded America of a fundamental truth — **VA disability compensation is not a handout; it's an earned benefit paid for through service and sacrifice.**

Now, the *Washington Post* has revived that same false and harmful narrative, claiming that veterans are "exploiting" the VA disability system. This is not only wrong, it's an attack on the integrity of those who served and on the moral contract between our nation and its veterans.

The VFW will not allow that narrative to go unanswered. **We will not let veterans be scapegoated for the costs of war.** It's time to stand united, lead from the front, and remind America what it truly means to **Honor the Contract.**

VFW National Legislative Committee Social Media Plan

Campaign: Honor the Contract – Veterans' Benefits Are Earned

Duration: October – November 2025 (extendable)

1. Purpose

Purpose: To correct misinformation about VA disability benefits, reinforce that these benefits are *earned compensation*, and mobilize VFW advocates to share factual, human-centered stories.

2. Target Audiences

- Primary: Veterans, service members, military families, and VFW members.
- Secondary: Lawmakers, congressional staff, media, and the general public.
- Amplifiers: Department Legislative Chairs, Post Commanders, Auxiliary leaders, partner VSOs, and local veteran advocates.

3. Core Message & Hashtags

Core Message:

"Veterans kept their promise. America must keep hers. This isn't charity — it's a contract."

Hashtags:

#HonorTheContract #VFWAdvocacy #VFWActionCorps #VeteransEarnedIt #VFW #KeepThePromise
#StillServing #AdvocacyInAction #ForVeterans #LeadAdvanceServe

4. Themes & Content Pillars (1-liner for each theme)

- Principles of Service Connection: Every VA claim requires diagnosis, in-service event, and medical link. That's law, not loophole.
- Social & Occupational Impact: Compensation covers the ripple effect — family, relationships, daily function, not just jobs.
- Human Impact: Veteran suicide, isolation, and divorce rates prove that employment alone isn't recovery.
- All Hazards of Service: Service-connected means ANY duty-related injury — combat, training, or toxic exposure.

- Toxic Meat Grinder of Forever Wars: Twenty-five years of nonstop war have lasting costs. We can't dodge the bill.
- Evolving Science and Knowledge of Benefits: Better science means better care — progress, not fraud.
- History Repeats: We've seen cuts before — 1933 & 1956 — and veterans fought back.
- Fraud vs Fact: Fraud exists — but it's rare. Honest veterans with real conditions are not criminals.
- Policy Drives Behavior: Fix policies that force veterans to chase 100% ratings just to access healthcare.
- Claim Sharks: The real fraud isn't veterans — it's Claim Sharks. These predators charge illegal fees and exploit confusion to profit off veterans. VFW has sounded the alarm for years. Don't Feed the Sharks.
- Who Is Behind This? Veterans are not the enemy. When Americans struggle, some look for a scapegoat — and history shows veterans often take the blame. We saw it in 1933, and we see it again today. The truth? Veterans built America's middle class and paid the biggest part of the bill for freedom.
- Honor the Contract: Veterans fulfilled their oath. Now the nation must fulfill hers.

5. Sample Posts (add personalization)

◆ **Option 1 – Core Message**

Veterans earned their benefits through service and sacrifice — not loopholes.

The VA system demands medical proof, documentation, and law.

This isn't charity. It's a contract. #HonorTheContract us

@Rep[NAME] @Sen[NAME] @Sen[NAME] — we expect you to stand with veterans and protect these earned benefits.

◆ **Option 2 – Myth Buster (General)**

The Washington Post is recycling the same bad ideas from 1933 and 1956 — trying to make veterans the scapegoat.

Veterans didn't break the system; we *built* the middle class.

#HonorTheContract #VFWAdvocacy

◆ **Option 3 – The Human Impact**

VA compensation isn't just about jobs — it's about healing, family stability, and preventing suicide.

Social and occupational impairment are real.

When veterans struggle, America struggles.

#HonorTheContract #VFW

◆ **Option 4 – Tag Your Legislator**

Veterans kept our promise. Now it's Congress's turn.

@Rep[NAME] @Sen[NAME] @Sen[NAME] — we expect you to reject any proposal that cuts earned benefits.

#HonorTheContract #VFWActionCorps

VFW to Washington Post - Veterans' Disability Benefits are Not 'Loopholes' to Exploit

The following letter from the VFW National Commander was submitted to the Washington Post today

Oct 07, 2025

To the Editors of The Washington Post,

Your recent article, "How some veterans exploit \$193 billion VA program, due to lax controls" (October 2025), is not just a disservice to veterans — it is a dangerously misleading piece that feeds into damaging stereotypes and ignores both the moral and legal foundations of the Department of Veterans Affairs disability system.

Let's be absolutely clear: veterans' disability benefits are not charity. They are compensation owed for injuries and conditions incurred in the line of duty — promised by a government that asked men and women to risk their lives and health, often irreversibly, on its behalf. These benefits are not some "loopholes" for opportunists to exploit; they are the very least this country can do for the people it sent to war repeatedly, especially after more than two decades of sustained conflict without a draft.

Your article leans heavily on inflammatory anecdotes and edge cases, portraying veterans as system abusers, while ignoring the structural reality: combat wounds are not the only occupational hazards of military service. The daily grind of service — exposure to toxic environments, repeated concussions, sleep deprivation, moral injury, sexual trauma, constant stress, and grueling physical demands — leaves lasting scars. Just because a veteran wasn't blown up by an IED doesn't mean they aren't disabled.

Invisible injuries like PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and toxic exposure-related illnesses are not "new" or suspect; we just finally stopped ignoring them. Every generation of veterans before this one suffered in silence, and many died without care or acknowledgment. To now

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say that recognizing these conditions is proof of fraud is not only illogical — it is cruel.

The article also seems to misunderstand how VA disability ratings work. The system doesn't compensate based solely on whether someone can work. It compensates based on how a service-connected condition impairs a veteran's average ability to function in life and society. The fact that a veteran can hold a job doesn't mean their disability doesn't make daily life harder, more painful, or more isolating. If VA ratings were based solely on complete incapacity, we wouldn't see skyrocketing rates of veteran suicide, addiction, homelessness, or divorce — all of which are fueled not by fraud, but by the very real and too often dismissed cost of military service.

Lastly, let's not ignore what this article really reflects: veterans make an easy scapegoat for the elites of this country. We're a small percentage of the population. Many Americans are disconnected from the wars they authorized or ignored. It is politically and socially convenient to question the integrity of veterans rather than confront the true cost of 25 years of war. But the cost is real. And the obligation to those who bore it is not optional.

If your investigative team wants to find waste and fraud, start with the contractors who overbill, the generals who fail upward, the executives of squandered programs, or the politicians who wave flags while gutting oversight. But don't you dare turn on America's sons and daughters who carried the burden of service and now ask only for the care and compensation they were promised.

We veterans kept our end of the agreement and will continue to demand that those who asked us to defend our nation do the same. **[Honor The Contract.](#)**

Sincerely,
Carol Whitmore
VFW Commander-in-Chief

Read Washington Post article [*How some veterans exploit \\$193 billion VA program, due to lax controls.*](#)