

**REP.  
RUSH  
HOLT**

## Healing Psychological Wounds

[www.holt.house.gov](http://www.holt.house.gov)

As you may know, in May of this year, the Department of Veterans' Affairs proposed to review 72,000 individual cases of veterans who were rated 100 percent disabled and unemployable within the last five years due to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This proposal clearly intended to rescind benefits for those who have been psychologically traumatized, usually as a result of intense combat situations.

Such a review is unjustified, and it minimizes the emotional scars that so many veterans retain long after their service is over. I joined more than 50 of my colleagues in writing the House Appropriations Committee leadership to ask

that they prohibit the VA from reducing a veteran's disability compensation for PTSD unless the veteran's disability status was the direct result of fraud by the applicant. Fortunately, such a provision was incorporated in the Senate Appropriations bill, scoring an important victory for veterans. I was insulted and angered by a Washington, D.C. think tank's recent allegation that PTSD compensation gives veterans financial incentives to claim psychological disorders and reduces their motivation to recover. Such an assertion is outrageous and wrong. I will continue fighting to ensure that veterans get the compensation and treatment they need for both physical and psychological wounds. ▶

### Representative Rush Holt

*As your Congressman, I am here to help. Contact me any time.*

**New Jersey Office**  
50 Washington Road  
West Windsor, NJ 08550  
ph: 609-750-9365  
fax: 609-750-0618

**Washington Office**  
1019 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
ph: 202-225-5801  
fax: 202-225-6025

**Toll free: 1-87-RUSH-HOLT**    **On the web: [www.holt.house.gov](http://www.holt.house.gov)**

**I can obtain, at cost,  
U.S. Flags flown over  
the U.S. Capitol.**

**Each flag comes with a  
certificate of authenticity  
with the date it was flown.**

Representative Rush Holt  
50 Washington Road  
West Windsor, NJ 08550

*Official Business  
This mailing was prepared, published,  
and mailed at taxpayer expense.*

  
M.C.  
PRSRT-STD



REPRESENTATIVE RUSH HOLT

# Veterans Update

NOVEMBER 2005

Dear Friend:

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan produce more veterans every day. We owe it to them and their predecessors from previous conflicts to honor their sacrifice. The dedication and patriotism that our veterans have shown through their service can never be repaid in full, but what we can do is provide them with the quality healthcare, job opportunities, and retirement security they deserve.

In Washington, legislation is often introduced and debated that could affect veterans' benefits or status. I have been working in Congress to fulfill the promises that our country has made to those who have courageously served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

In my effort to keep you informed about issues important to American veterans, this newsletter includes articles that I thought may be of interest to you. I hope that you find it informative and helpful. I look forward to hearing your opinions, and I encourage you to contact me if I can be of assistance to you in dealing with the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) or any other federal agency. Each year, I help veterans with problems ranging from healthcare to service medals. Please feel free to call me at 1-87-RUSH-HOLT (1-877-874-4658) or email me through my website ([www.holt.house.gov](http://www.holt.house.gov)) on any issue of concern.

Thank you for your service to our country. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Rush Holt  
Member of Congress

**New Jersey Office:**  
50 Washington Road • West Windsor, NJ 08550 • (609) 750-9365 • Toll Free: 1-87-RUSH-HOLT  
(1-877-874-4658)

**Washington Office:**  
1019 Longworth HOB • Washington, DC 20515 • (202) 225-5801

**Please visit my Website at [www.holt.house.gov](http://www.holt.house.gov) to learn more about what I am working on,  
and to sign-up for my occasional e-mail newsletter, the [eGenda](#).**

## Protecting the Patterson Army VA Clinic

[www.holt.house.gov](http://www.holt.house.gov)

On August 24th, the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission delivered an ill-conceived and poorly justified decision to close Fort Monmouth. This decision was reached despite my best efforts and those of the bipartisan New Jersey Congressional delegation, Governor Codey, and members of the Fort Monmouth Community. It is a mistake that may have serious ramifications for our soldiers bravely serving around the world and for people here in New Jersey.

One consequence of Fort Monmouth's closure with which I was particularly concerned was reduced access to healthcare for the 2,500 veterans who are currently treated at the Patterson Army Health Clinic. You may be pleased to hear that I recently received assurance from U.S. Veterans' Affairs Secretary Jim Nicholson that the Outpatient Clinic will remain at its current location until 2010 at least, and in Monmouth County thereafter.

Those who have served in harm's way deserve timely and convenient access to VA healthcare. I will take whatever measures are necessary to hold the VA to its pledge. ▶



*Rush speaks with a veteran about keeping promises to retired service members by providing healthcare, job opportunities, and retirement security.*

## Job and Education Opportunities

As many who have served in the Armed Forces are aware, the transition to civilian life can be difficult. In August, the U.S. Department of Labor released a report showing that many veterans have difficulty finding new employment, despite having qualities and skills that make them ideal candidates for many jobs. In fact, the number of newly discharged U.S. veterans collecting unemployment insurance has nearly doubled in the last three years despite a sharp decline in the overall number of Americans claiming jobless pay. Some 2,000 new veterans join the benefit rolls each week.

We all have an interest in helping veterans transition to civilian life. I am working to pass:

- The New G.I. Bill of Rights Act, legislation that expands job and education opportunities for returning service members, and provides better healthcare and survivor benefits for active duty and reserve service members.
- Legislation creating "Hire a Veteran Week," an effort to encourage businesses to offer employment to veterans.

Also, I am working to establish a Congressional internship program whereby Members of Congress hire returning veterans to work in their legislative offices. This would allow policymakers to benefit from the veterans' military experience and expose the veterans to public policy career opportunities. ▶

## Cutting Through Red Tape for Veterans and Their Families

[www.holt.house.gov](http://www.holt.house.gov)

One of the most important and gratifying parts of my job as your Representative is ensuring that veterans and their surviving relatives receive the benefits to which they are entitled. If you are having a problem receiving the VA or Department of Defense benefits that you or your spouse have earned through service, please do not hesitate to call me toll-free at 1-87-RUSH-HOLT or email me through my website at [www.holt.house.gov](http://www.holt.house.gov).

Let me give you just one example of how I might be able to help. Earlier this year, I was contacted by the widow of World War II U.S. Army veteran Thomas K. from Lawrenceville. Due to a bureaucratic error at the Department of Defense's Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), Mrs. K.'s survivor's benefits were being improperly withheld, and despite her best efforts, DFAS refused to pay the benefits that Mr. K. had rightfully earned. I was pleased to contact personally DFAS on Mrs. K.'s behalf and resolve the issue, releasing a lump sum payment of retroactive benefits and a monthly stipend thereafter. ▶



*Rush thanks soldiers returning from Iraq for their service to our country at a welcome home event in the Lawrenceville Armory.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

**According to the Department of Labor, 6.9% of recently discharged veterans are unemployed, and one in five has a service-connected disability. Rush is working to increase job opportunities for veterans by expanding education benefits, establishing a Congressional Veterans Internship Program, and encouraging employers to hire veterans.**