

News →

- DoD study - 10,000
- no 1 single illness
- press stories not good
 - doo don't push adw comm
 - yesterday computer link

- Daskin → 1 Hrs ✓
- one-pager
- VBA Workplan
- DoD → Subvention
- 8A - 1-pager ✓

Toni - g's / issues

Gl bill → how does it
work?

FAX COVER SHEET

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 + intern Peter Beach 690-5672
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 Fred Schroeder 205-9874
 Preston Taylor 219-4773
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- Robert Neal → head of 804 program
 205-6459

FROM: Molly Brostrom
 Senior Policy Analyst
 Domestic Policy Council

PAGES (INCLUDING COVER): 8

If there is any problem receiving this fax please call Marcea Hosay at 456-2846 or Tom Fox at 456-5586.

Gegrich - include SSA on group
 - welfare reform → alphabet of rolls

Add'l
 = Meeting with USOs → Sept
 = Other agencies ?

Goals Clinton Accomplish

• Budget -
 work w/ LeeAnn
 where is VA in process
 → by next

• Medicine Sub
 • Elig Reform - log passed
 • H'loss

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 26, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR INTERAGENCY VETERANS POLICY GROUP

FROM: LeeAnn Inadomi 
Special Assistant to the President
for Cabinet Affairs

Jeremy Ben-Ami 
Deputy Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

SUBJECT: Agenda for June 28 Meeting

The next meeting of the Interagency Veterans Policy Group (IVPG) is Wednesday, June 28, 2:00-3:30 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Attached is the updated working agenda of the IVPG. As you recall, this working agenda is developed based on issues raised in White House meetings with veterans service organizations (VSOs) and military coalition groups. The Chairs of the IVPG -- the Offices of Cabinet Affairs, Domestic Policy, and Public Liaison -- met with representatives of VSOs and military coalition groups on May 24 and 25, and presented a status report of issues addressed by the IVPG and heard new concerns. In general, there was praise for the progress achieved by the IVPG.

The attached agenda includes any outstanding issues as well as new concerns.

Please review the document and come to the meeting prepared to report on the issues in which your agency is involved.

If you have any questions about any of the issues identified, please call Molly Brostrom at the Domestic Policy Council (456-5561).

**INTERAGENCY VETERANS POLICY GROUP
WORKING AGENDA
June 28, 1995**

Mand - ASRA 93 extended - Conferees also

Short term Issues

1. Budget

Discr - over 7 → 10

Corps 127.5 - hit constr. spending 60%

*→ C.B. savings
o ↑ v-hrly comp. payment
o limit comp. payment for
mentally ill*

The budget continues to be of primary interest to the veterans service organizations (VSOs) and military coalition groups. The groups reiterated their support for the President's 1996 budget and opposition to Republican proposals. The Reserve Officers Association cited a specific concern that "earned benefits" for military retirees are under attack in budget balancing proposals.

There was also concern about provisions in the Republican Rescission package, including a \$50 million cut in VA medical care and a \$5 million cut/elimination of DOL's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program. *\$31 M cut for restr*

OMB will report on status of Rescission package and these specific provisions.

2. White House Conference on Aging

Representatives of veterans service organizations had high praise overall for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging, held on May 2-5. The Conference included 20 delegates appointed by Secretary Brown and 40 appointed by veterans' organizations.

VSOs and the military coalition groups expressed concern, however, about the resolutions voting process and outcome. WHCoA staff, working with Veterans Affairs, are in the process of scheduling a meeting with representatives from VSOs and military coalition groups for early to mid-July to discuss these concerns.

3. Uniformed Services Medical School

*- needs leg to do so;
Phase out after 4 yrs*

Several of the military coalition groups are concerned about an Administration proposal to close the Uniformed Services Medical School. The proposal has been a part of the Vice President's National Performance Review, the President's budget, and the Pentagon's Bottom Up Review. The groups have concerns about the data used in making the decision to close the school, and claim that the proposal has no chance in Congress given past opposition. GAO is in the process of conducting a review of this issue.

→ timing?
NPR, OMB, and DOD will give background and any update on the issue.

- Elaine, Nancy Ann, Norma St. Clave

PHS → fabulous in it

*2 Assume that p will happen
in 96*

4. Constitutional Amendment to Ban Flag Burning

At a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Walter Dellinger of DOJ presented the Administration position that, while the President has a long and vocal record in support of protecting the Flag from desecration and worked to craft legislation to outlaw such desecration, he does not support this Constitutional amendment to ban Flag burning. A Rep. Solomon (R-NY) sponsored House joint resolution to amend the Constitution to ban flag burning is expected to come to a vote in the House on Wednesday, June 28.

= Keep low key

OPL will report on White House discussions with the American Legion on this issue.

- timing in Senate?

→ Jim Daskal - influx of 11th - response

5. Department of Labor Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training

The Department of Labor's Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training is expected to present a report of its findings to the Secretary by July 1.

Preston Taylor

DOL will present any preliminary findings, highlighting any areas where the IVPG may be helpful in addressing recommendations.

= Minority

Longer Term Issues

1. Health Services/Eligibility Reform

Pilot diff → defining alt's - admin, risk
3-month; very technical
OMB, VA, HCFR studying → right policy
Sept. 21

Health and eligibility reform continues to be of primary importance to the VSOs and military coalition groups. The second phase of the Department of Veterans Affairs' National Performance Review (REGO II) -- which VSOs and military coalition groups were briefed on prior to the May 25th Vice Presidential announcement -- takes important steps toward addressing these concerns. The initiatives included under this effort are designed to improve services to veterans, revamp VA's complex medical care eligibility rules, determine pilots to test the use of Medicare benefits at VA hospitals, and save money by streamlining, privatizing, or consolidating unnecessary or duplicative activities.

7/19-

H by on elig reform

OMB and VA will report on any reactions to and on the status of the REGO II proposals, in particular the Medicare subvention pilot. = JB → comment?

= Phoebe Vickers.

Military coalition groups are also concerned that: 1) under-65 military retirees are required to pay enrollment fees and copayments in the Tricare Prime health care program, unlike any other group in the DoD community; and 2) Uniformed Services Treatment Facilities (USTFs) will be integrated into the Tricare Prime HMO network resulting in a lack of access to these facilities for the over 65 military retiree who cannot enroll in Tricare Prime, and new requirements for enrollment fees and co-payments at formerly free USTFs.

DOD will discuss.

Norma St. Claire

\$230/460

- in past, no enrollment fees
- before merged

2. Employment Issues

Employment issues were high on the VSOs' agendas. Several organizations raised the concern that insufficient attention is being paid to the employment impact on veterans and the military of recent military downsizing and base closures. The Vietnam Veterans of America in particular are concerned, fearing that an employment crisis is beginning among Vietnam Veterans. They cited statistics stating that veterans are being hurt in disproportionate numbers because of recent downsizing and dislocation in the private sector as well as in the military and other parts of government.

Specifically, the groups cited the following issues:

a) Employment and Training Consolidation proposals

There are several proposals on the Hill that would consolidate and/or block grant employment and training programs, including the Veterans Employment Training System. In moves toward streamlining and state/local control, VSOs want assurance that veterans will continue to be recognized as a federal responsibility. If veterans programs are folded into consolidation proposals, VSOs want a structure for veterans representation and veterans-specific activity to be retained. There is support for language that has been included in House and Senate E&T consolidation legislation requiring veterans representation on local and state boards.

⇒ will have supportive
H bill ⇒ don't contain

b) Vocational Rehabilitation

Concern was cited that VA vocational rehabilitation programs do not sufficiently assist veterans in returning to employment. It was suggested that there be further coordination between VA's vocational rehabilitation and DOL's veterans employment programs.

DOL and VA to present ideas on how improved coordination can be achieved.

- Memorandum of agreement → DOL access to VA voc rehab clients prior to coordination - VSOs, Congress pleased
\$50 voc rehab ctrs

3. Homelessness

VSOs continued to name homelessness among veterans as a top issue of concern. The concern is multiple: One, the size of the problem among veterans and the need to expand efforts to end it. Two, a perception that HUD is reluctant to reach out to veterans and to fund veteran-specific programs. Three, the need for greater interagency coordination in addressing homelessness among veterans.

To address the need for greater interagency coordination, we are creating an IVPG staff-level homelessness subgroup. **All agencies with programs affecting homeless veterans (in particular HUD, VA, HHS, DOL, and the Corporation for National Service) should bring the name of your designee to the subgroup to the June 28 meeting.**

+ staff-member from ICH + others?

⇒ mtg by next wk

Richard Fitzpatrick³

\$25 M to vets-sp prgs

In addition, a meeting has been scheduled between the Assistant Secretaries at HUD and DOL to discuss interagency cooperation. → Friday

HUD will present any further updates.

4. National Guard Military Technician Reductions

The National Guard is concerned that reductions in National Guard Military technicians are occurring at the same time that DOD is placing greater emphasis on the National Guard/Reserve, and that this reduction will threaten troop readiness.

DOD will discuss. → refer to NSC

- report
- policy review group issue
options: restore or maintain
- coming up w/ DoD recomm.

5. Disability Policy

VSOs continued to highlight the importance of disability policy to many members of the veterans community. The Administration's National Disability Policy Review (NDPR) and general commitment to disability policy was seen as even of greater importance in the current context of budgetary and philosophical attacks on programs.

6. Backlog at Board of Veterans Appeals

The Department of Veterans Affairs has been working to address the backlog of claims at the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) through internal administrative initiatives, legislation, and the creation of panels of experts to review and improve procedures. In addition, the President's FY 96 budget included almost \$30 million for information technology improvements to assist in claims processing.

VA will continue to update the IVPG on progress being made.

- article

7. Persian Gulf Veterans

On May 26, the President signed an Executive Order creating and naming the members and chair of the Presidential Persian Gulf Advisory Committee to review and make recommendations aimed at finding the causes of illness and improving the care available to Persian Gulf veterans.

Other Administration initiatives support the Presidential Advisory Committee. For example, veterans who have disabling illnesses that have defied diagnosis are, for the first time, eligible for veterans' compensation benefits. In addition, DOD will, for the first time, provide research grants to university faculty and other non-Federal scientists to study the causes, treatment, and possible transmission of Gulf War illnesses. The Administration will spend \$8-13 million on new research -- epidemiological research, research on the interactions between anti-nerve gas pills and insecticides and other chemicals, and a wide

Robin Sheehan - staff dir.
interagency wkg grps
- planning 1st ad hoc comm mtg in July

? back of coop w/
PA Nat'l Guard

range of other research.

NSC will provide any update. - Diana

8. Veterans Preference

= thing of civil service reform still unclear

There is general support for the Administration's proposals for civil service reform, including praise for the degree of access OPM Director King has given the groups. The caution was raised, however, that despite budgetary constraints at OPM, OPM still must retain the ability to monitor agency compliance with federal personnel policies.

OPM will update on the status of civil service reform proposals and address the concern about OPM oversight.

- that part of agency maintained

9. SBA 8A Program

The Small Business Administration's 8A Program provides assistance in obtaining government contracts for economically and socially disadvantaged individuals. The IVPG continues to work with the SBA in exploring greater access for both veterans and for the disabled to 8A preferences in contracting.

The President's National Disability Policy Review team has agreed to consider this issue in their review of federal programs. They have nothing to report at this time.

The 8A program was asked to develop simplified instructions for individuals who wish to apply. SBA will report on the status of these instructions.

- simplified appl → new forms 2-3

- possibly privatizing → cost-oriented, user friendly

10. National Guard/Reserve Job Security

- goal of 15,000 participants

During Desert Storm, an unprecedented number of Ready Reserve of the Armed Forces were called to active duty, causing disruption in their lives in many ways, including economically. As a result, proposals have been raised to provide economic assistance or assurance for members of the Ready Reserve to alleviate the economic effects of activation for service in support of urgent operational missions or in times of national crisis.

The Department of Defense is developing a proposed insurance program to be offered to reservists to protect them against financial disaster if mobilized for a long period of time. The IVPG will continue to monitor the status of this proposal.

DOD and OMB will present any update.

= criticism diff. for minors/non-minors

- dep't on WTT diff. between short

- 1-pg set of instr's expl'g criteria that must be met

5

Pilot program - mainly admit if fraud info → can never again apply

SBA → video/seminar
→ would like to see how ppl react to new form

11. World War II End Commemoration

Commemoration of the end of World War II continues through November 11, 1995. The President will travel to Honolulu in early September for VJ Day activities.

12. Korean War Veterans Memorial

On July 27, the new Korean War Veterans Memorial will be dedicated. President Clinton and South Korea President Kim will participate in the dedication, and it is estimated that close to 100,000 Korean War veterans will participate in commemoration ceremonies in Washington. An Interagency Coordinating Group under the National Security Council is working on the event.

⇒ late Sept - Oct - next mtg w/all gps



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20416

JUN 28 1995

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Molly Brostrom
Domestic Policy Council

FROM: Sheryl J. Swed *Sheryl Swed*
Assistant Administrator for
Division of Program Certification
and Eligibility

As you requested, I have sent you a copy of the application package used to apply to the 8(a) program. This package is available at all of SBA's district offices and is usually given to participants during a seminar on how to apply to the program.

I have highlighted the section that applies to individuals who are not members of designated groups for your convenience.

Our office has worked to streamline the 8(a) process by revising the Form 1010B. I have enclosed the new version for you so that you can see the differences. This form is presently being printed at GPO and will be available to our offices by the end of the summer. It is shorter, easier to understand and, we hope, user-friendly.

I will provide updated information on the number of 8(a) companies owned by veterans and the percentage of government contracts they received by Friday, June 29th.

If you would like additional information, please call me at 205-6416.

E X E C U T I V E O F F I C E O F T H E P R E S I D E N T

23-Jun-1995 01:37pm

TO: Nancy-Ann E. Min

FROM: Molly Brostrom
 Economic and Domestic Policy

SUBJECT: IVPG Mtg

The IVPG meeting was put on your schedule a couple weeks ago--my intern called the whole group. I guess he gave the message to your scheduler--and it didn't get to you.

Anyhow, you are on the list to be called; I will also add Toni; and the meeting is Wed, 2-3:30, in the Roosevelt Room. I will be faxing around the agenda later today.

As far as Medicare subvention -- Jeremy would like to have it on the agenda (under the health/eligibility reform heading), and have our response to military hospitals be that we are monitoring the pilot at VA hospitals and will assess after completion; and have OMB or HHS/HCFA give any update on the pilot at the meeting. Sound okay?

Another agenda item that I alerted NPR and DoD to, and I understand OMB is involved in as well, is the proposed closing of the Uniformed Services Medical School. It sounds like an issue the Administration is firm on--we'd just like to hear the background at the meeting.

Thanks. Let me know if you have any thoughts/questions.

New York Regional
Office is a GPRA performance
pilot and they proved that
with their performance +
reengineering that you can
really turn things around.
(Got the Hammer Award).

None of us can understand why
VA does not implement these
~~at~~ VBA wide. Bottom line -
no one in control. Regional
offices do their own thing. (Not political)
Ask about this / go to NY

Also: 52 Regional offices could be
collapsed to free up resources and
implement initiatives quicker (Very political)

monthly report / milestones
= targets

- Cong. mandated advisory comm → Rpt in Nov.
Nora Egan

THE WASHINGTON POST

THE FEDERAL PAG

Veterans Program Does Not Compute

Millions Spent on Automation but There's Little to Show, GAO Says

By Bill McAllister
Washington Post Staff Writer

Three and one-half years and about \$100 million after it embarked on a project to computerize its benefit programs, the Department of Veterans Affairs still lacks an overall plan for integrating the new computers into its operations, the General Accounting Office told Congress last week.

GAO officials told a House Veterans Affairs subcommittee that the VA cannot estimate how much money the department has spent on the computers and said the VA "needs to have a breather in terms of spending more money" on the program.

The subcommittee estimated the spending at about \$100 million.

Frank W. Reilly, a GAO information specialist, urged the panel to demand the VA develop a business-like strategy to lower the time it takes to process claims.

He called the computer program a case of "putting the cart before the horse."

Rep. Terry Everett (R-Ala.), chairman of the subcommittee on veterans compensation, pension, insurance and memorial affairs, expressed concern that the computer program ultimately would cost \$1.5 billion without offering faster or better service.

"That's part of what scares me to death," he said.

"If there is one thing that representatives from the VA should take back to their offices today, it is that this committee is dead serious in its oversight duties regarding this computer system," Everett said. He promised to hold more hearings.

VA officials said they are developing a plan for using the computers with an improved benefits program, but they doubted it would be completed by the end of the fiscal year.

Raymond H. Avent, deputy undersecretary for veterans benefits, said the department agreed with most of the criticisms from the GAO and other agencies.

The computer program is one of

the biggest in the government, designed to automate the handling of \$19 billion a year in claims from 26 million veterans and dependents.

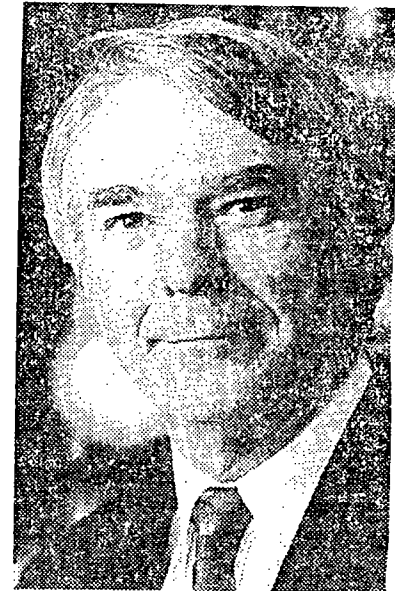
It has been controversial since it began in the 1980s.

For three years, the department and GAO have been at odds over the program, but Reilly said the VA's attitude changed recently. He hailed the department's new approach, but said it must improve its claims processing.

While the VA recently recorded a decrease in processing times, Reilly noted the department is unable to say why it occurred.

That means the department may not be able to duplicate the reduction, he said.

By September, the VA will have 400,000 claims that will take an average of five months to process, Reilly said. The VA's current goal is to cut claims processing to 106 calendar days, down from a current 166 days. But the GAO official suggested it should be much faster, "less than 68 days."



REP. TERRY EVERETT

... "dead serious" about issue

He cautioned, however, that the GAO believes it will take the VA 18 months to three years to implement a program that would allow it to handle all claims in a paper-less environment.

If a bank can process a loan application within a day, the VA should be able to act faster on claims, said Rep. Gerald "Jerry" Weller (R-Ill.). "It just takes too long to process veterans claims," he said.

IN BRIEF

that most is
be flex-
ed up th
Mr. Dole
oster h

E X E C U T I V E O F F I C E O F T H E P R E S I D E N T

30-Jun-1995 03:17pm

TO: Molly Brostrom

FROM: Kyle M. Baker
 Presidential Correspondence

SUBJECT: Flag Desecration letters

Sorry it's taken me a little while to get back with you about the flag desecration letters. I was able to get some information for you. So far, there have not been as many letters written to the President on this topic (about fifty, to be exact) as one might expect. I think this is probably because the Administration did not have much vocal opposition to the amendment. Several VSOs wrote the President on this topic, including VFW, American Legion, and Disabled Veterans of America.

I would be glad to fill you in more as more letters filter in on this emotional topic (remember, the mail on a very current topic takes a few days to reach our office).

Thanks,
Kyle Baker
6-5515

COPYoriginal mailed
7/17/95MEMORANDUM

To: Manuel Auerbach - Jewish Veterans

From: Robert B. Blancato
Executive Director

Re: Follow-up to July 10 meeting

Date: July 17, 1995

As a result of our meeting last week, we have made the following proposals to the members of the 1995 White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) Policy and Advisory Committees:

1) To include in the draft of our final report, which will be sent to the Governors for their comments on August 3, 1995, the addition of two delegate-introduced resolutions -- #76, offered by the National Council of Senior Citizens, and #132, offered by veterans organizations -- to the list of official WHCoA resolutions. Both of these resolutions received more than 900 votes.

2) To include in this draft report a list of all delegate-approved resolutions; that is, those resolutions which received more "yes" votes than "no" votes. These resolutions will be listed in descending order, thus ensuring that resolutions #133 and #134 will receive visibility in the final report.

Language will be developed for the report indicating that certain issues relative to the voting process were brought to our attention, and these proposals are offered because of the merits of these arguments.

During the week of August 3 you will be sent a copy of the proposed report sent to the Governors.

I greatly appreciate your continued support of the 1995 WHCoA, and I hope you will stay involved by organizing and participating in post-Conference events.

Thank you.

INDIVIDUALS WHO PARTICIPATED IN MEETING RE: VETERANS ISSUES
July 10, 1995

Manuel Auerbach

Delegate to Conference from Silver Spring, MD
(301) 589-0248

Leo Avila

American GI Forum of the United States
(209) 847-6841

Fred Cowell

Paralyzed Veterans of America
Also a delegate to the Conference
(202) 872-1300

R.G. Fazakerley

Blinded Veterans Association
Also a delegate to the Conference
(703) 548-2607

Carroll M. Fyffe

Military Order of the Purple Heart
Also a delegate to the Conference
(602) 458-9228

General Earl G. Peck

Florida Dept. of Veterans Affairs
Also a delegate to the Conference
(813) 893-2440

Carol Rutherford

American Legion
Also representing Barbara Kranig, delegate from Wisconsin
(202) 861-2700

Richard C. Schneider

Non-Commissioned Officers Association of the USA
Also a delegate to the Conference
(703) 549-0311

Steve Smithson

Intern at the Non-Commissioned Officers Association
(703) 549-0311

Harold M. Serven

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.
Also a delegate to the Conference
(202) 543-2239

Also participating were John Hanson, representing the Dept. of Veterans Affairs; Theresa Forster, representing Chairman Pryor; Bob Blancato; and WHCoA staff.