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# HOUSE COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

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## Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

[Bill Text](#) | [Committee Report](#)

The 2023 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill provides \$314.1 billion, an increase of \$29.5 billion – more than 10 percent – above 2022. Of this amount, discretionary funding for programs such as veterans’ health care and military construction totals \$150.5 billion, an increase of \$23 billion above 2022. The legislation:

- Supports our veterans with investments in health care, including targeted investments that advance women's health, mental health, and homelessness assistance
- Rebuilds our infrastructure with strong investments to construct critical facilities on military installations, including family housing and childcare centers, and build, repair, and retrofit Veterans Affairs facilities
- Protects our national security with investments to respond to the challenges posed by Russian and Chinese aggression
- Confronts the climate crisis with increased climate change and resiliency funding to help military installations adapt to rising sea levels and worsening natural disasters

### **Bill Summary:**

**Military Construction** – The bill provides a total of \$15.1 billion for military construction – \$153 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$2.9 billion above the President’s budget request. Of this amount, the bill includes:

- \$274.4 million for **Child Development Centers**, an increase of \$49.7 million over the enacted level and \$186 million above the budget request. Of this amount, \$48.6 million is for the planning and design of future childcare facilities. These funds will support increased capacity and better facilities for the 1.2 million children of active duty servicemembers worldwide.
- \$2.1 billion for **Family Housing**, an increase of \$168.8 million above the budget request. Within this amount, Family Housing Support and Management is funded at \$373 million to address issues such as mold, vermin, and lead in military family housing, as well as increased oversight of military privatized housing.
- \$1 billion for construction or alteration of **Guard and Reserve** facilities in states and territories, an increase of \$379.3 million above the budget request.
- \$220.1 million for the **NATO Security Investment Program**, an increase of \$4.3 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$10 million above the budget request, for infrastructure necessary for wartime, crisis, peace support and deterrence operations, and training requirements. The funds will support

responses to the challenges posed by continued Russian aggression following the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, as well as the risks and threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa.

- \$574.7 million for **Base Realignment and Closure**, an increase of \$45 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$290 million above the budget request. Within this amount, cleanup of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) contamination is funded at \$200 million.
- \$653.3 million for **the Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program (ERCIP)**, an increase of \$184 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$100 million above the budget request, to fund projects that improve energy resilience, contribute to mission assurance, save energy, and reduce the Department of Defense's energy costs.
- \$510.4 million for **Housing for Unaccompanied Personnel** at various locations, an increase of \$108 million above the budget request.
- \$135 million for **Climate Change and Resiliency Projects**, which is \$15 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$135 million above the budget request.
- \$1.3 billion for **Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Plan (SIOP)** projects, which is \$492 million above the 2022 enacted level, and equal to the budget request.

**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** – The bill provides a total of \$135 billion in discretionary appropriations for VA, an increase of \$22.8 billion above the 2022 enacted level and \$48 million below the President's budget request. These resources will serve to expand access to services for veterans and will boost oversight and accountability across the department. Of this amount, the bill includes:

- \$118.8 billion for **Veterans Medical Care**, an increase of \$21.8 billion above the 2022 enacted level and \$66 million above the budget request. This will provide care for 7.3 million patients expected to be treated by VA in fiscal year 2023. Consistent with the Biden Administration's budget request, VA Medical Care is considered separate from other non-defense discretionary funding. Of this amount:
  - \$13.9 billion is for **Mental Healthcare**, an increase of \$743.8 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$1.5 million above the budget request, including \$498 million for suicide prevention outreach. This will support the nearly 2 million veterans who receive mental health services in a VA specialty mental health setting, as well as support suicide prevention services like the Veterans Crisis Line, which is expected to see an increase in demand by over 100 percent in the coming year.
  - \$911.1 million is for **Gender-specific Care and Programmatic Efforts for Women**, an increase of \$70.7 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$10 million above the budget request. Women are the fastest growing cohort within the veteran community, with over 600,000 women veterans using VA health services.
  - \$2.7 billion is for **Homeless Assistance Programs**, an increase of \$531 million above the comparable 2022 enacted level and equal to the budget request. This funding will enhance VA's ability to reach homeless veterans, which is particularly crucial as the most recent homelessness survey showed that on a given night in January 2021, an estimated 19,750 veterans were experiencing homelessness.

- \$183.3 million is for **Substance Use Disorder programs**, an increase of \$27 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$2 million above the budget request. This funding will help support care for the over 540,000 veterans who had a substance use disorder diagnosis in 2021. Additionally, \$662.8 million is for opioid abuse prevention, an increase of \$41.5 million above the 2022 enacted level and equal to the budget request. This funding will allow for more targeted funding of pain management and opioid safety programs primarily at the facility level.
- \$85.9 million is for **Whole Health Initiatives**, an increase of \$2.3 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$10 million above the budget request. This will enable VA to build upon the success of this program that focuses on veterans' overall health and well-being, which saw 573,940 veterans participating in 2021.
- Additionally, the bill includes \$128.1 billion in advance fiscal year 2024 funding for **veterans' medical care** – equal to the President's budget request. This funding will provide for medical services, medical community care, medical support and compliance, and medical facilities, and ensure that our veterans have continued, full access to their medical care needs.
- The bill includes \$16.2 billion for non-VA Medical Care programs, which is \$1.4 billion above the 2022 enacted level. Of this amount:
  - \$926 million is for **Medical and Prosthetic Research**, an increase of \$44 million above the 2022 enacted level and \$10 million above the budget request. This funding will allow VA to exceed the budget request's target of funding approximately 2,697 total projects and partnering with more than 200 medical schools and other academic institutions.
  - \$1.76 billion is to continue the implementation of the **VA Electronic Health Record System**, which is equal to the budget request. These funds will allow VA to support the continued deployment of the new electronic health record system at VA medical centers and allow for intensive staff training and support, which is critical to the success of the effort. The bill also continues Government Accountability Office oversight of this program to ensure that the system is implemented in a timely manner.
  - \$2 billion is for **VA Construction** programs. Within this amount, the bill provides \$1.4 billion for Major Construction and \$626 million for Minor Construction projects. These funds will support VA's highest priority projects, correct critical safety and seismic deficiencies, and address other performance gaps at VA facilities to ensure that veterans can access care in modern facilities that are safe, secure, sustainable, and accessible. In addition, \$968 million in funds made available by the Recurring Expenses Transformational Fund will support additional VA construction projects, for a total funding level of \$3 billion in fiscal year 2023, which is \$802 million above the 2022 enacted level.
  - \$3.9 billion is for operating expenses of the **Veterans Benefits Administration**, an increase of \$409 million above the 2022 enacted level and equal to the budget request, to ensure the prompt processing of disability claims. This funding will allow VA to address increasing disability compensation claims and administer service-connected disability compensation payments in 2023 to an estimated 5.5 million veterans and 500,000 survivors and dependents. In addition, pension payments will be funded for nearly 300,000 veterans and their survivors. The bill also continues rigorous reporting requirements to track each regional office's performance on claims processing and appeals backlogs.
  - \$150 million is for **Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities**, an increase of \$100 million above the 2022 enacted level and equal to the budget request. This increase will allow VA to provide more grants to assist States in constructing State home facilities, for

furnishing domiciliary or nursing home care to veterans, and to expand, remodel, or alter existing buildings.

- Additionally, the bill includes \$155.4 billion in fiscal year 2024 advance mandatory funding for VA benefit programs, equal to the President's budget request.

**Related Agencies** – The bill provides a total of \$440.9 million in discretionary appropriations for the four related agencies funded in this bill, which is an increase of \$6.7 million above the 2022 enacted level. Of this amount, the bill includes:

- \$155.9 million for **Arlington National Cemetery**, including \$60 million to complete the urgently needed Southern Expansion project that will create 80,000 additional burial spaces. This is equal to the President's budget request.
- \$87.5 million for the **American Battle Monuments Commission**, equal to the 2022 enacted level and \$700,000 more than the budget request. This will support continued maintenance of the graves of 124,000 American war dead in overseas cemeteries, as well as visitor and education services for the more than 3 million visitors expected to visit these sites in fiscal year 2023.
- \$152.4 million for the **Armed Forces Retirement Home**, \$75.4 million above the 2022 enacted level and equal to the budget request. This will support the needs of the over 800 residents at the two retirement home campuses and invest in critical life and safety infrastructure improvements, including construction funds for the renovation of the main resident building on the Washington campus.
- \$45.2 million for the **Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims**, \$3.5 million above the 2022 enacted level. This will enable the Court to keep pace with its caseload of veterans' appeals, which consisted of over 8,000 appeals in 2021.