



# HARRY MITCHELL

Representing Arizona's 5th district




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Dear Friends,


As you know, I sought out a seat on the House Veterans Affairs' Committee because I believe that the best way to honor the sacrifices of our veterans is to treat them with the care and dignity they have earned and deserve.

Shortly after joining the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I was chosen by my colleagues to chair the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. As Chairman, I've pushed the Department of Veterans Affairs to reach out to the over 17 million veterans not enrolled with the VA, to improve the quality of patient care at VA hospitals and clinics, and to combat the rising epidemic of suicides among our nation's veterans.


Last week, we took another important step toward ensuring that our veterans have reliable care when the House of Representatives passed the Military Construction and Department of Veterans' Affairs Appropriations Bill with a broad, bipartisan vote of 415-3, and included the long sought [advancement in aid for the VA](#).



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*Rep. Mitchell discusses his meeting with VA Assistant Secretary Tammy Duckworth about improving outreach to our nation's veterans*

Advance funding for the VA, a key priority for our nation's veterans that I strongly supported, had been championed by [The Partnership for Veterans Health Care Budget Reform](#). The Partnership is comprised of nine veteran service organizations (VSOs) who had all urged Congress for more than a decade to reform the system of funding VA health care so that it is sufficient, timely and predictable.

At a House Veterans' Affairs Committee roundtable in January, VSOs from across the country came together to share their priorities for the 111th Congress and the advancement of aid for VA health care was at the top of their list. [The American Legion](#) argued that all too often, budget delays not only threaten the VA's ability to provide quality care but also forced veterans onto waiting lists. The idea behind advancement of aid is that if Congress passes a budget for the VA a year in advance, it will reduce the risk that veterans' medical care will suffer as a result of political

posturing and budget gimmicks.

We've been able to make some significant improvements for our veterans and I'm proud of the work we have done so far. Last year the [Webb-Mitchell New GI Bill](#) was signed into law, in the wake of the indignity over the Walter Reed scandal we took proactive steps to improve our military and veterans hospitals and we convinced the VA to [overturn their ban on the use of television media](#) so they could reach out to our servicemen and women returning from war that were suffering from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

These are all important milestones for our veterans, but there's still much work to be done. I will continue to work with Republicans and Democrats alike as we continue to honor those who have served us. Our servicemen and women have earned it.

Sincerely,

