

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF RHODE ISLAND  
ONE CAPITOL HILL, PROVIDENCE, RI 02908  
WWW.VFWRI.ORG**

April 2, 2025

To: Chairwoman Tanzi and member of the Human Services Subcommittee of the House Finance Committee

From: Matthew B. McCoy, National Legislative Committee Member, Department of Rhode Island of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

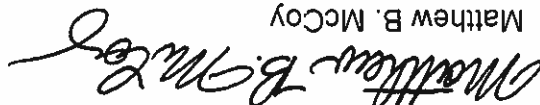
Subj: FY 2026 Funding for the Rhode Island Office of Veteran Services and the Service Office of the Department of Rhode Island of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

1. The Rhode Island Department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States fully supports the proposed FY 2026 budget for the Rhode Island Office of Veteran Services, including continued funding of \$100,000 for the operation of the service office run by VFWRI's VA-accredited Service Officers.
2. VFWRI's Service Officers are two of over 2,162 VA-accredited Service Officers working as part of the VFW's National Veteran Service (NVS). They have completed rigorous background checks, extensive training, and testing to receive and maintain their VA accreditation.
3. VFWRI's Service Officers are based out of offices located at the Providence VA Regional Office. They are available and accessible to Rhode Island veterans and their survivors. They are actively involved in community outreach throughout Rhode Island.
4. VFWRI's Service Officers connect with transitioning veterans at Transition Assistance Program (TAP) classes held at the Naval Station, Newport, RI. The connections made here allow the veterans to submit their initial VA claims prior to being discharged from the military, allowing them to receive VA compensation and pension benefits as soon as they have left the service.
5. VFWRI's Service Officers regularly attend Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) events held for deploying and returning members of the Rhode Island National Guard (RING). Additionally, they have attended numerous veterans resource fairs held in communities throughout Rhode Island.
6. VFWRI's Service Officers provide Rhode Island veterans with a knowledgeable, experienced, and trustworthy resource to help them for free through the entire VA claims process.

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7. VFWRI respectfully requests that you continue to include \$100,000 of funding in the Rhode Island Office of Veteran Services budget for FY 2026 for the purpose of funding the VFWRI's Service Office.

Very respectfully,

  
Matthew B. McCoy