

WHY WORK WITH CONGRESS?

It is often said that to achieve social change we need to Educate, Agitate and Legislate; that is create an informed public that will act to demand a change in policy. VFP encourages our members to consider building an active relationship with their Senators and Representatives as the third leg of this stool. Whether we like it or not, they are the ones making decisions that affect issues we care about deeply. They are one of the most direct routes to change.

Congressional staff say that as few as 10 letters or emails from constituents can make a difference – depending on the issue and how the letter is written. Online and phone access can make this easy, but each house of Congress also schedules a week each month for their members to be at home, so you may have more direct access to your representatives than you think.

Perhaps you find it difficult to work with some of your U.S. Senators and Representatives, but is there not one where your voice, the voice of a veteran, the voice of VFP can make a difference? Sometimes it is valuable just to make dissent heard in the halls of power.

Remember, no one in the government is going to tell us we made them change. We have to see that and tell ourselves. Clearly, in 2013 and early 2014 U.S. public opinion kept the U.S. military out of Syria. Clearly, U.S. public opinion is limiting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Maybe we can do more. A lot is at stake.

For more ideas, check out [Building a Relationship with Congress.](#)

Thank you for considering this important aspect of our work,