



NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS

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**Policy and Legislative Update: Appropriations Begin for FY 2015**

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At the annual conference in late May, NCHV staff was joined by Michael Blecker (Swords to Ploughshares), Pete Dougherty (NCHV Board Member), and Elisha Harig-Blaine (National League of Cities) as we conducted our annual Public Policy Forum. Staff would like to take this opportunity to thank our participants, as well as all of you who were able to attend and contribute. Your participation in the feedback portion of the forum was helpful in guiding our advocacy work on the Hill and with the Administration. Please be looking for the after-action report in the coming weeks.



With the House starting earlier than at any time since the 1960's, we are already well into the appropriations process. At press time the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (MilCon/VA) and the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bills had already been passed by the whole House, and were on their way through the Senate portion of the process.

Despite disagreement in the House regarding the funding levels of some other poverty reduction and housing initiatives, both the House and Senate versions of the THUD bill contain \$75 million for an additional ~10,000 HUD-VASH vouchers for Fiscal Year 2015. This will bring the total number of available HUD-VASH vouchers up to more than 78,000 vouchers by the end of FY 2015.

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*Mission: The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans will end homelessness among veterans by shaping public policy, promoting collaboration, and building the capacity of service providers.*



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The MilCon/VA appropriations bill passed in the House makes \$250 million available for the Grant and Per Diem (GPD) program for FY 2015, and \$300 million available for the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) for the same year. This constitutes a \$15 million increase in the GPD program. Because of the two year schedule of MilCon/VA appropriations bills, the House also voted to appropriate \$253 million for GPD and \$500 million for SSVF in FY 2016. The FY 2016 appropriation for the SSVF program represents a 733% increase in funding over the last five years.

While these figures all represent gains in the fight against veteran homelessness, NCHV remains committed to all other programs which effect the mission that were not represented here. We are also currently engaged in advocacy to allow the SSVF program to expand in FY 2015, both through appropriations and authorization avenues.

In the coming months, we will have more updates for you on the funding picture for next year. We also hope to have good news regarding the signing into law of several extant bills in Congress, covering issues from HVRP eligibility to support of dependents through the GPD program. Be sure to check for Policy and Legislative Updates here and via our electronic mailing lists.