

Veterans Committee in conjunction with Quarterly meetings with the Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Directors and JAIIVAC (Joint American Indian Veterans Action Council), which consists of the Pacific Northwest Indian Tribes Tribal Veteran Representatives, who are appointed by Tribal Leaders, and some Tribal Veteran Programs, to provide new networking to maintain health and care for our warriors in compliance of Federal and State Agencies for the purpose of benefiting Veterans and Service Members.

Since the beginning of the Tribal Veterans Program, one of the Founders in memory and heart, Jo Jay Pinkham who was long standing Veterans Committee Chair and Jim Vance, recently retired VA Director, who also was a great asset, Joseph Boyd (Lucky) and Frank Cordero, promoted a need in Indian Country and networking of Federal and State agencies, from the beginning state of Washington, to Idaho now including Oregon as far as Duck Valley, providing training, in benefits and services, and networking with their county agencies. To fulfill the needs to our warriors.

Our Committee has brought forward MOU's with Indian Health Services, to benefit our clinics and offer a comfortable environment for our troops at home. Promoting the Native Direct Home Loan, education benefits for past and present theater and assisting in placing warriors in assisted living and nursing home care. Providing safe financial needs regarding non-service connected benefits which are taxable and as example keeping the receipt of monies of disbursements, like Cobell dollars, exempt. Working towards the opportunity of HUD\VASH mou's for the purpose of supporting homeless Veterans in Senate Bill.....

We, as Tribal Veteran Representatives, have our priority of serving the many warriors within Indian Country and honoring all veterans. Our warriors have been the largest per capita in each theater and were the largest per capita as tunnel rats, forward observers, HU pilots in combat theater, we hear how folks respond to respect our troops and set them as priority. We always ask how are you supporting them?

What we feel is the best to support them is to provide them with the services they so deserve as they have given years and some the ultimate sacrifice to provide us our freedom and choice of voice for all of what we need.

Our response to support would be for each nation to provide a well training Tribal Veteran Representative to answer all the needs in regards to health, education, employment, housing and homelessness. To be prepared without confusion where the needs may be met. To provide a presence in the Federal and State agencies.

Now as we have moved forward, presence as Terry Bently, Stephanie Birdwell, have been the right arm to training and needs, and we would like to see Tribal Veteran Representative well trained and certified to be able to be Federal Regional offices for benefits on equal terms.

In closing ATNI will be presenting Resolutions regarding a TVR Placement and Certification as there are only three in the state of Washington as this time. Supporting of action report to Umatilla Tribe for progress of Walla Walla VA Medical facility, Supporting Terminology in VA Grants to include more to Indian Country, and to support the homeless housing bill. We would also like to announce, the transportation grant for Veteran Rural Transportation has been extended to October 9th. Thank you.