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**Heller Joins the President as He Signs Bipartisan Bill to Improve Care for Nevada’s Veterans Into Law**

*Heller Secured Three Provisions in the VA MISSION Act*

**WASHINGTON –**U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV), a senior member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, today joined President Trump as he signed the bipartisan [John S. McCain III, Daniel K. Akaka, and Samuel R. Johnson VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Networks (VA MISSION) Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=CFEFA8BC-5617-41EA-8B18-DA3A2254F863) into law. The legislation, which includes three provisions authored by Heller, further funds and reforms the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Community Care Program, expands eligibility for caregivers, and improves the VA’s ability to recruit and retain doctors.

The VA MISSION Act includes three of Heller’s proposals: the [Veterans Transplant Coverage Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/11/u-s-house-passes-heller-bill-to-aid-veterans-in-need-of-transplants), which allows veterans to receive live donor organ transplants from non-veterans; [the VA Bonus Transparency Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=F37A2278-20CE-476D-A75A-BF2B1D949A9A), which requires the VA to annually report on the bonuses awarded to critical positions within the VA; and the Maximizing Efficiency and Improving Access to Providers at the VA Act, which requires VA to hire medical scribes for patient data entry so physicians can spend more time with the veteran patient.

“On the anniversary of D-Day, we’re reminded of the sacrifices of our courageous veterans and that we owe our service members a debt that can never be repaid. That is why I am so proud to join the President as he signed the bipartisan VA MISSION Act into law in order to improve the care that our nation’s veterans receive,” **said Heller.** “Our veterans deserve to know that our nation will support them when they return from the frontlines, and that’s what this bill is all about. It empowers veterans and provides veterans with decision-making power to get care that works for them, on their schedules, near their homes, and I’m proud to have my provisions included in the legislation. As a senior member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, I’ll continue to work with both sides of the aisle to champion policies that help Nevada’s 300,000 veterans.”

Additionally, the VA MISSION Act improves the VA’s ability to hire high-quality healthcare professionals and establishes a process to evaluate and reform VA’s existing facilities to best serve veterans. It also expands the VA Caregivers program, which provides a stipend to family members of disabled veterans in need of home health care. Currently, only post-9/11 veterans are eligible for the program, and the VA MISSION Act broadens the program to include veterans of all eras.

The legislation is supported by more than three dozen veteran and military advocacy organizations, including the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Concerned Veterans for America.

**BACKGROUND**

**Heller Provisions Included in the VA MISSION Act:**

* **The Veterans Transplant Coverage Act:** Allows veterans to receive live donor organ transplants from a non-veteran with their VA coverage. Currently, the VA does not support the cost of a donor transplant operation if the live donor is a non-veteran.
* **The VA Bonus Transparency Act:** Requires the VA to submit an annual report on performance awards and bonuses given to high-level VA employees.
* **A Pilot Program for Medical Scribes:** Requires the VA to hire medical scribes for patient data entry so physicians can spend more time with the veteran patient.

[In the 115th Congress alone, the President has already signed five of Heller’s bills to help Nevada’s veterans](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=45CA3448-AC0D-42D6-A7FC-828F5DCBC6E5) in addition to the legislation signed today. That includes Heller’s legislation to expand veterans’ GI Bill education benefits and ensure veterans’ continued access to life-saving surgeries. In March, Heller’s [Veteran Urgent Access to Mental Healthcare Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=42D0F165-0646-4EE0-9383-13500FF34336) became law as part of the omnibus spending measure.

**Veterans Bills that Heller Authored or Co-Led Signed into Law During the 115th Congress:**

* S. 2548 (Heller authored), Veteran Urgent Access to Mental Healthcare Act
* S. 2247 (Heller authored), legislation for VA cemetery improvements
* S.114 (Heller authored), VA Choice and Quality Employment Act
* S. 1362 (Heller authored), Guard and Reservists Education Improvement Act
* S. 1277 (Heller co-led), VET TEC Act
* S. 1024, (Heller original cosponsor) Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act
* S. 1094, (Heller original cosponsor) Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act
* S. 1598, (Heller original cosponsor) Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act
* S. 1489, (Heller original cosponsor) Veterans Education Relief and Reinstatement Act
* S.784 (Heller original cosponsor) the Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act

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