

# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

REPUBLICANS | RANKING MEMBER MIKE BOST

## **The VA Caregiver Transparency Act**

### **Background:**

The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Family Caregiver Program provides the caregivers of certain seriously injured veterans with support, including a monthly, tax-free stipend. The Family Caregiver Program was established in 2010 for the caregivers of post-9/11 veterans. In 2018, the MISSION Act required VA to expand it to the caregivers of pre-9/11 veterans, starting with those injured during military service on or before May 7, 1975. Initial expansion of the Family Caregiver Program was supposed to occur in 2019 but was delayed until 2020. As a result, total expansion will not occur until 2022 under current law.

The VA Caregiver Transparency Act would allow VA to complete the expansion of the Family Caregiver Program sooner than 2022. It would also clarify Congressional intent regarding the clinical nature of the Family Caregiver Program by stipulating that it is subject to VA's clinical appeals process. Finally, the VA Caregiver Transparency Act would require VA to report to Congress on the status of the Family Caregiver Program and on how to improve the timeliness, transparency, objectivity, consistency, and fairness of the clinical appeals process. This would ensure that expansion of the Family Caregiver Program occurs as soon as possible and that it is successful in supporting veterans and their caregivers.

### **The Message:**

- The caregivers of our nation's veterans are heroes in their own right, and they deserve respect and support.
- The VA Caregiver Transparency Act would allow VA to accelerate the expansion of the Family Caregiver so that the caregivers of veterans of all eras can benefit from it.
- The VA Caregiver Transparency Act would help lawmakers and stakeholders oversee VA's caregiver support services to ensure VA is meeting the needs of veterans and their families.