

84th Engineer Battalion

Association Newsletter



84th Engineer Battalion Association

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Veterans groups blast proposed tea party cuts

By Rick Maze - Staff writer

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A proposal to cut \$4.5 billion from Veterans Affairs Department health programs to reduce government spending has earned a quick, sharp rebuke from major veterans groups.

Proposed by Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., the freeze in veterans health care funding — along with a cut in disability compensation for veterans also receiving Social Security disability benefits — are part of a \$400 billion package of spending cuts that the tea party leader says could be enacted



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**Rep. Michele
Bachmann's proposal
to freeze health care
funding for veterans
drew a sharp rebuke
from veterans groups.**

to avoid increasing the \$14.3 trillion cap on government borrowing.

Disabled American Veterans called Bachmann's ideas "ill-advised," "nothing short of heartless" and "wrong-headed." Veterans of Foreign Wars said she was "totally out of step with America's commitment to our veterans."

Veterans for Common Sense said they were "outraged" that her proposal "would leave veterans twisting in the wind."

"It is unconscionable that while our nation is at war, someone would even think of forcing our wounded warriors to sacrifice even more than they already have," said David Gorman of the DAV. "Their injuries and disabilities were the result of their service to the nation, and our nation must not shirk its responsibilities toward them. How do you tell a veteran who has lost a limb that he or she has not sacrificed enough? Yet Rep. Bachmann wants to do just that."

Bachmann's proposal would result in a reduction of up to \$2,224 a month in veterans' disability compensation for a veteran who also receives Social Security Disability Income, known as SSDI. Additionally, it would freeze veterans' health care funding at current levels.

Richard Eubank, VFW national commander, said his organization will work to stop the proposal. "No way, no how, will we let this proposal get any traction in Congress," he said.

"There are certain things you do not do when our nation is at war, and at the top of that list is not caring for our wounded and disabled servicemen and women when they return home," Eubank said. "The day this nation can't afford to take care of her veterans is the day this nation should quit creating them."

Paul Sullivan, executive director of Veterans for Common Sense, who first spotted the proposal on Bachmann's official congressional website, said 10,000 new veterans a month are seeking treatment from VA.

"In the middle of this dramatically increasing need at VA to care for our veterans, comes Rep. Michele Bachmann," he said, calling her efforts to cut veterans funding just as combat operations appear to be winding down in Iraq is similar to cuts after the Vietnam War and the 1991 Gulf War that left VA struggling to care for veterans.

DAV's Gorman said capping veterans' health care funding "will not only freeze out sick and disabled veterans seeking care, it will also end up costing the federal government even more money."

"With the number of veterans seeking health care rising, the effect of a freeze would be to either block enrollment of veterans, many of them just returning from battlefields in Iraq and

Afghanistan, or to ration care to currently enrolled veterans, including disabled veterans who have relied on VA dating back to World War II,” Gorman said.

The Obama administration is prepared to cut federal spending, but not like this, said White House spokesman Shin Inouye.

“While we need to make tough choices across the federal government to get our deficits under control to be competitive in the global economy, we should do so in a way that upholds the sacred trust our nation has with its veterans, troops and military families,” Inouye said.

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Vietnam Veterans Fast A Dying Breed

- by mike_brewer on Oct. 03, 2009, under Health, Veteran Pals, Veterans Global, Veterans' Spouses, Partners & Families



In case you haven't been paying attention these past few decades after you returned from Vietnam , the clock has been ticking. The following are some statistics that are at once depressing yet in a larger sense should give you a **HUGE SENSE OF PRIDE**

“Of the 2,709,918 Americans who served in Vietnam, less than 850,000 are estimated to be alive today, with the youngest American Vietnam veteran's age approximated to be 54 years old"

If you're alive and reading this, how does it feel to be among the last 1/3rd of all the U.S. Vets who served in VietNam !?!?!? ...don't know about you guys, but kinda gives me the chills, considering this is the kind of information I'm used to reading about WWII and Korean War vets... So the last 14 years we are dying too fast, only the few will survive by 2015...if any.. If true, 390 VN vets die a day so in 2,190 days from today,

lucky to be a Vietnam veteran alive..... in only 6 years..

These statistics were taken from a variety of sources to include: The VFW Magazine, the Public Information Office, and the HQ CP Forward Observer - 1st Recon April 12, 1997.

INTERESTING CENSUS STATISTICS. THOSE TO CLAIM TO HAVE “been there”:

1,713,823 of those who served in Vietnam were still alive as of August, 1995 (census figures).

During that same Census count, the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country was: 9,492,958.

As of the last Census taken during August, 2000, the surviving U.S.

Vietnam Veteran population estimate is: 1,002,511. This is hard to believe, losing nearly 711,000 between '95 and '00. That's 390 per day.

During this Census count, a huge number of Americans falsely claimed to have served in-country . (fact check note by Mike Brewer. I do not concur with this figure. The only qualifier may be that there is a misunderstanding about what “In Country” means. There are tons of “Era Vets” who are categorized as Vietnam Veterans, which is sort of true, but they are Vietnam ERA Vets, and never left the United States. Their census number is quite high, but I do not think it is this high.)

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Did You know you that you can help with the 84th Engineer Battalion Association Bereavement Fund by making a purchase from our PX?

Go to <http://www.84thengineers.com/index.htm> and you can purchase a hat, patches or a bracelet.

All monies go into a bereavement fund that will enable the Association to send flowers, or a charitable donation to the family of a deceased member.

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Memories of Vietnam

If you haven't done so already, please take a look at the hundreds of photographs we have received from our members. There are photo's from virtually every company within the battalion and attached units. (<http://www.84thengineers.com/photo%20links.htm>)

It's easy to contribute any photographs to the Association. Just scan them and send them to: webmaster@84thengineers.com. Also, if you have any items that you brought back from Vietnam, why not take a photo of it and send it to us. We'll get them posted for others to see as well.

(Special thanks to Richard McCorrison for all his endless work on the 84th Engineers web site.)

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Breaking News

Rep. Michele Bachmann took a lot of heat last week from veterans groups that criticized her plan to trim the deficit by cutting back on veterans benefits among other government programs. In a statement on Friday, Bachmann said she has removed those cuts from consideration.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars vowed to fight Bachmann on the issue. “No way, no how, will we let this proposal get any traction in Congress,” said Richard Eubank of the VFW last week. “There are certain things you do not do when our nation is at war, and at the top of that list is not caring for our wounded and disabled servicemen and women when they return home.”

The uproar seemed to have caused Bachmann to change her tune.

“One point on my discussion list was a \$4.5 billion proposal that would affect payments made to our veterans,” Bachmann said in a statement. “That has received a lot of attention and I have decided that it should be removed from consideration. The problem of government spending must be solved, but not on the backs of our nation’s war heroes. I have always been a proud supporter of the United States military and I continue to stand with our veterans. In the months ahead I look forward to working with our Veterans Service Organizations to ensure that we fulfill our commitments to those who sacrificed so much in their brave service for our country.”

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