

Minnesota Commanders' Task Force 2018 Legislative Agenda





From the Chair of the CTF:



Fellow Veterans, Family, and Friends: We are all very aware of the ongoing war throughout the globe as it seems to have been going on forever. We have service members spread all over the world, and their injuries becoming worse, we must stand up for them by supporting legislation that will help protect their families as well as service members now and in the future. If we do not stand together, we will fall together.

Many of you have served and given a part of your body or mind for this nation; for this we owe you our deep gratitude. Legislation is one place we can all make a difference by speaking up for and defending the men and women who have served so gallantly for our great nation. We need to be sure our representatives at the State Capitol and in Washington, D.C. understand needs of Veterans as well as the needs of their families.

I am honored to serve as the State Commander of the Disabled American Veterans and Chair of the Minnesota Commanders' Task Force and to work with you to improve the lives of Minnesota Veterans and their families. I will do everything possible to see that your needs are heard. Below are my goals, visions, and objectives, some of which have been stated in the past by past State Commanders and Chairs. Their words are my words.

Vision: That we improve the lives of all Veterans and their family members.

Goals: That all Veterans in Minnesota receive the benefits they earned when they raised their right hand and took the oath to protect and serve. To include health care, pensions and care for their families.

Objectives:

- Support all efforts to make Minnesota a Veteran friendly State for all Veterans.
- Support all efforts to find housing for our homeless Veterans throughout the state.
- Support roundtable discussions around the State to ensure Veterans are aware of all available benefits.
- Continue to support and enhance State Veteran Home services and healthcare capacity.
- Support the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs budget to insure they have the funds needed to support all Veterans relative to programming and services.
- Support all efforts to reach our female Veterans in receiving the specialized care they need.

I have talked with all the Commanders of these member organizations, Commissioner Shellito and many of his staff and many County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO) who I know believe in helping Veterans the best they possibly can. I look forward to continually work with the leaders of member organizations as well as other organizations, the Commissioner and his staff, CVSOs, and each of the Veterans in the State of Minnesota. I feel very honored and privileged to serve as the chair of the Minnesota Commanders' Task Force.

- Robert Sadoris

About the Minnesota Commanders' Task Force

The Minnesota Commanders' Task Force (CTF) was created in 1988 and is comprised of elected commanders and appointed adjutants of nine congressionally-chartered Veterans Service Organizations in the state of Minnesota. Key functions of this group include:

- Developing a united Veterans legislative agenda and actively advocating for it before state and elected officials.
- Serving as a non-partisan advisory group to the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA), the Governor and Legislators on veterans' issues in the state.
- Working to seek and form Veterans Service Organization partnerships in program development (for example, the state's Veterans Day program).

Member Organizations



American Legion



Military Order of the Purple Heart



AMVETS



Paralyzed Veterans of America



Disabled American Veterans



Veterans of Foreign Wars



Jewish War Veterans



Vietnam Veterans of America



Marine Corps League

2018 Legislative Priorities

1. Lifetime Homestead Market Value Exclusion for Surviving Spouses

CTF urges the legislature to make the Homestead Market Value Exclusion permanent by eliminating the eight year cap for surviving spouses of a deceased Veteran. This change would allow the surviving spouse to receive the exclusion until they remarry, sell, transfer or otherwise dispose of the property.

HF2735/SF2329

2. Military Beneficiary's Pay or Benefits Protections

CTF supports legislation to prohibit a party from entering or attempting to enter into an agreement with a military beneficiary that assigns the beneficiary's pay or other benefits to another party in a manner that violates federal law. This legislation would protect Veterans and other beneficiaries from giving a source (i.e. pension) of income to bad actors like predatory lenders. This initiative has the support of the Minnesota Attorney General's Office.

HF3059/SF2753

3. Support MDVA's request for Asset Preservation Funding

CTF supports the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs' request for funding to address critical repair projects at the five State Veterans Homes. This funding is necessary to maintain facilities with basic systems, life safety and to meet regulatory requirements so that Veterans are able to receive proper care. The Minnesota State Veterans Cemeteries also require funding for the maintenance and upkeep of their facilities.

Legislation has not been introduced

4. Free or Reduced Cost Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Licenses for Service-Connected Disabled Veterans

CTF supports a reduction in the threshold level of disability rating from the current 100% for Veterans to be eligible for free or discounted deer hunting, trapping, small game and lifetime fishing licenses.

Legislation has not been introduced

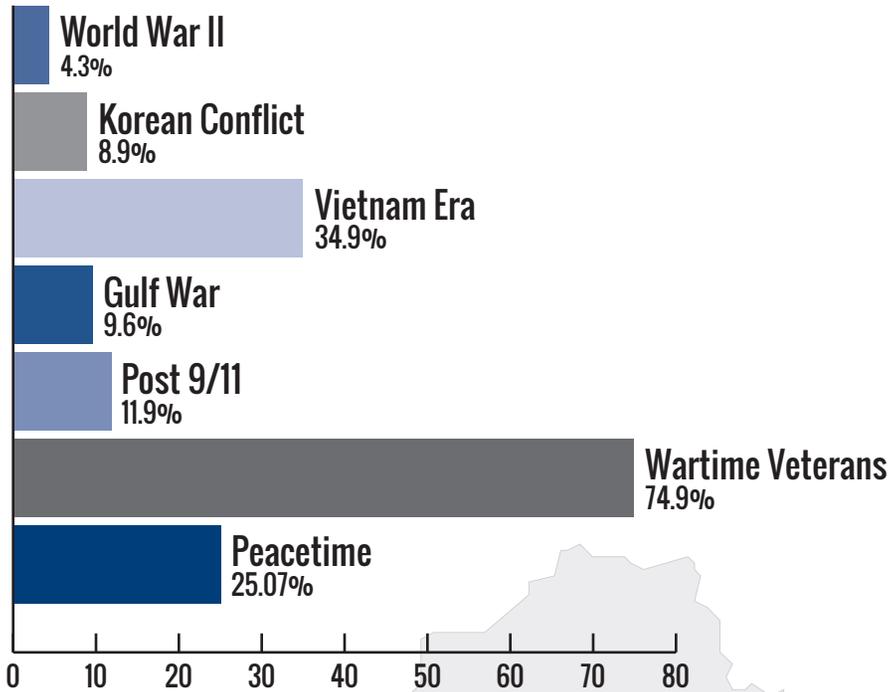
5. Expansion of Veterans Courts Statewide

CTF urges legislators to provide for the expansion or creation of Veterans Courts (or related treatment and diversion programming) to all district courts in the state of Minnesota.

Legislation has not been introduced

State Veteran Numbers by Era

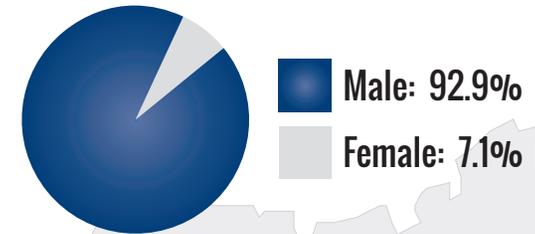
Veterans in Minnesota (2017 statistics)



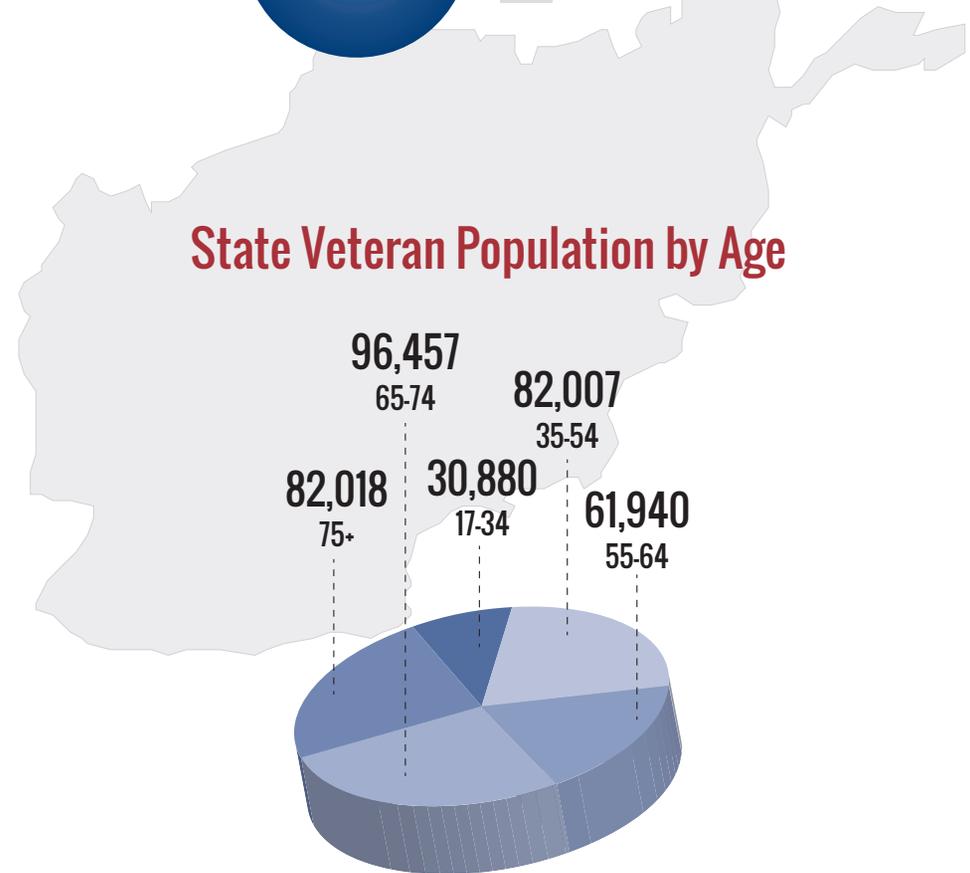
MN Total Population:
5,576,606
(2017 estimate)

MN Total Veteran Population:
337,362
(about 6% of the total population)

MN Veterans by Gender



State Veteran Population by Age





Thank You

for supporting Minnesota
Veterans and members
of the Armed Forces!

- Minnesota Commanders' Task Force



minnesotaveteran.org

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(546-5838)