

## Trump Administration's plan to expand private care for vets sparks fight over VA's future

Government Executive

The Trump administration has issued its plan to streamline and expand its programs allowing veterans to receive health care from the private sector, igniting the first spark in an upcoming fight on the future of the government's role in providing care to former military personnel. Lawmakers, veterans service organizations and other advocacy groups have expressed concern about the approach the Trump administration would take as it sought to remake the choice program and consolidate its private care offerings. [READ MORE](#)

## VA officials promise they're not looking at benefits cut this year

Military Times

Months after Veterans Affairs officials dropped plans for a controversial benefits cut, the families of those who would have been affected still fear they could lose thousands in monthly payouts. Confusion over the short-lived plan this week forced department leaders to issue a letter to veterans groups clarifying they will not change the Individual Unemployability program in fiscal 2018, and are looking for other cost-saving solutions in the future. [READ MORE](#)

## Retirees, VA disability recipients to get biggest pay raise since 2012

Military.com

Military retirees and those who receive disability checks and some other types of pay from the Department of Veterans Affairs will see a 2 percent pay raise in their monthly paychecks in 2018. It is the biggest cost of living (COLA) increase since 2012, equaling as much as \$310 a month for those at the top of the retirement pay charts. The average military retirement check for an E-7 with 20 years of service will go up by \$46 a month, while an O-5 with the same time in uniform will see an \$88 monthly increase. [READ MORE](#)

## DoD Disability Awards celebration reflects progress, official says

U.S. Department of Defense

The Pentagon's annual awards ceremony that highlights the achievements of department employees with disabilities reflects the progress that's been achieved, and also serves as a reminder that more remains to be done, Anthony M. Kurta, performing the duties of undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said here today. [READ MORE](#)

## Deputy Secretary Shanahan hosts Vietnam War commemoration

U.S. Department of Defense

Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan welcomed the directors of "The Vietnam War" documentary to the Pentagon today and spoke directly to Vietnam vets as the Defense Department continued its commemoration of the Vietnam War. Shanahan thanked directors Ken Burns and Lynn Novick for capturing the stories and histories and sparking "a national conversation" on the war. [READ MORE](#)

## TAPS statement on presidential condolences to the families of the fallen

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

"While there is no one way to acknowledge the death, what is important for the family is that the President acknowledges the life and service of their loved one, and expresses gratitude on behalf of the nation. We can all follow his example and support these families as they grieve," stated Bonnie Carroll, TAPS president and founder. [READ MORE](#)