



THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF IOWA

2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



1. **Military Homeownership Assistance Program**

The Military Homeownership Assistance Program is one of the most attractive benefits within Home Base Iowa's arsenal aimed at the recruitment of out of state veterans.

The Military Homeownership Assistance Program continues to be marketed to veterans even after the funds have been exhausted for the fiscal year and veterans are placed on a waiting list.

The American Legion supports increased funding for the Military Homeownership Assistance Program to make the program available throughout the entire fiscal year.

2. **Veterans' Treatment Courts**

The American Legion urges the State of Iowa to establish and expand Veterans Treatment Courts.

Veteran Treatment Courts are hybrid Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts and have evolved out of the growing need for a treatment court model designed specifically for justice-involved veterans to maximize efficiency and economize resources.

Many veterans that enter the veteran treatment courts are not aware of their federal, state, county and a variety of additional benefit programs, such as Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits for compensation, pension and health care.

Grouping justice-involved veterans into a specific court docket significantly expedites access to veteran-specific resources, including benefits and treatment earned through military service and provides options for treatment as opposed to incarceration.

3. **Funding for Veterans Service Organizations Representing Veterans with the Veterans Benefits Administration**

The American Legion supports providing an annual appropriation to support the operation of Service Offices of the nationally accredited Veterans Service Organizations providing claims assistance to veterans seeking benefits from the Veterans Benefits Administration.

4. **County Commission of Veterans Affairs Fund**

The American Legion Department of Iowa supports an increase to the annual appropriation to the County Commission of Veterans Affairs fund to be used for national training and related expenses for county veteran service officers and appropriate staff.