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2026 Veterans Legislative Symposia Report May 8, 2026

1. **Purpose:** This report presents recommendations gathered from Nevada's Veterans Community for consideration by the Governor and the Nevada State Legislature.

2. **Background:**

a. The Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) partnered with Nevada's United Veterans Legislative Council (UVLC) to host three Veterans Legislative Symposia in March and April of 2026 in Las Vegas, Reno, and for the first time, Elko, Nevada.

(1) In Las Vegas, 182 registered online and 95 participants checked in at the 18 April 2026, event held in the auditorium of the VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System.

(2) In Reno, 95 registered online and 65 participants checked in at the 28 March 2026, event held at Truckee Meadows Community College.

(3) In Elko, 23 registered online and 49 participants checked in at the 26 March 2026, event held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2350 building.

b. The purpose of Nevada's Veterans Legislative Symposia is to bring together representatives from the Nevada veteran's community to develop legislative recommendations for the upcoming legislative session. The results of these symposia are compiled into a report and presented to the Governor and to members of the Nevada Legislature.

c. While the purpose of the symposia is to identify issues that might be addressed by the State of Nevada Legislature, issues are often raised that can be addressed by the Governor or by State of Nevada agencies. These issues are referred to the appropriate State authority. Additionally, any Federal issues raised by participants are presented to members of Nevada's Congressional delegation for their review and consideration.

d. The symposia started with opening remarks by NDVS Director Col. Mary Devine (Ret.) who explained the symposia purpose and agendas. In Elko and Reno, participants also heard from Cesar Melgarejo, Senior Policy Analyst with the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB). In Las Vegas, the LCB presentation was provided by Destini Cooper, Senior Policy Analyst with the LCB. Other Las Vegas participants included State Assemblymembers Erica Mosca, Reuben D'Silva, Howard Watts, and Daniele Monroe-

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e. In Elko, the opening portion of the symposium concluded with remarks by UVLC honorary member Andy LePeilbet and in Reno and Las Vegas, UVLC Chairman Chris Harvey made the remarks on behalf of the UVLC. Both invited the audience to participate in the legislative process, provided advice on how to interact and speak with a legislator, and to consider participation in the UVLC explaining how the impact of joint action can positively impact legislative outcome.

f. Following the opening sessions, the floor was opened to veterans to present individual or organizational issues or concerns. Prior to the symposia, recommendations were gathered from three advisory boards, the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA), Nevada Veterans Services Commission (VSC), and the Women Veterans Advisory Committee (WVAC), for consideration. During the symposia, participants offered additional recommendations, which NDVS staff recorded on large sheets of paper designed to accommodate self-adhesive voting dots for prioritization. Attendees were each given 15 self-adhesive dots and asked to vote by placing them next to the issues they considered most important.

3. Issues Identified by the VSC, ICVA, and WVAC:

a. There were 10 total issues identified by the three advisory bodies, the VSC, ICVA, and WVAC prior to the symposia.

b. All 10 issues were posted for symposia participants in Elko, Reno, and Las Vegas to review and prioritize. This consolidated list of issues is not repeated in the individual symposium tables outlined in TABLE B.

TABLE A outlines each issue, the recommending body, and the resulting outcome:

TABLE A
2026 Veterans Legislative Symposium
(Identified by the VSC, ICVA, WVAC)

10 Issues for Consideration by the Governor, State Legislature, and Federal Representatives

Item #	Total Votes	Elko	Reno	Las Vegas	11 Prioritized List of Pre-Identified Issues by VSC, ICVA, WVAC
1	115	16	42	57	Expand VSO and Navigator outreach to rural, untethered, and minority veterans throughout the state at no charge by connecting them with their earned federal and state benefits and resources. (VSC, ICVA, WVAC)
2	78	0	26	54	Create employment reciprocity programs for military members, veterans, and their spouses. Reduce barriers to occupational licensing by streamlining the state licensing process and increasing access to resources. (VSC, ICVA, WVAC)
3	63	6	20	37	Designate recognition of Women’s Military History Month a permanent annual recognition in June of each year. (WVAC)
4	50	12	22	16	Continue to support the Office of Attorney General’s Office of Military

Item #	Total Votes	Elko	Reno	Las Vegas	Legal Assistance (OMLA) for pro-bono veteran legal representation. (VSC, WVAC, ICVA)
11 Prioritized List of Pre-Identified Issues by VSC, ICVA, WVAC					
5	50	1	24	25	Fund and support a robust electronic verification system of veteran status that allows for a state-wide efficient and effective system through NDVS that identifies the benefits and resources needed. (WVAC, ICVA)
6	41	6	18	17	NV State agencies to submit information regarding military members, veterans, and military/veterans' spouses' programs, services, and events to NDVS. (ICVA)
7	40	6	23	11	Support NDOC and Veteran Specialty Courts to prepare veterans for re-entry into the community. (WVAC, ICVA)
8	38	8	16	14	Support Veterans' Treatment Court options in rural and eastern Nevada and provide NDOC & County Sheriff's Departments with veteran-specific programming and resources. (ICVA)
9	38	5	8	25	Waive annual business license fees for newly created veteran-owned businesses. (WVAC)
10	37	10	18	9	Continue to support Veteran Suicide Prevention by participating in the SAMSA Governor's and Mayors' Challenges. (VSC, WVAC, ICVA)

4. 2026 Veterans Legislative Symposia Outcomes (STATE):

a. The issues presented in TABLE A are not included in the tables below. Across the three 2026 Veterans Legislative Symposia held in Elko, Reno, and Las Vegas, participants identified and prioritized a total of thirty-four (34) state-level issues. Of these, six (6) issues were common across the three symposia, resulting in a final total of 28 unique state recommendations brought forward by symposia participants. (See TABLE B)

b. The six common issues that emerged from the recommendations are as follows:

THEME 1: Require VA accreditation of unaccredited claims agents.

THEME 2: Amend NRS 396.540 to expand higher education benefits to children of certain veterans.

THEME 3: Provide free State Park access to Gold Star Families.

THEME 4: Increase specialty license plates to include affiliation, campaign ribbons, as well as veteran supporter plates.

THEME 5: Increase service animal access and standards in public spaces.

THEME 6: Support continued state funding for Nevada State Veteran Homes construction projects.

TABLE B
2026 Veterans Legislative Symposium
(Identified by Elko, Reno, Las Vegas, Symposia Participants)
 34 Issues for Consideration by the Governor, State Legislature

ELKO Item #	10 Elko Issues Raised 3/26/2026	Total Votes #
1	Require VA accreditation for unaccredited claims agents.	32
2	Increase number of VSOs in Nevada.	29
3	Create specialty license plates for veteran organizations such as Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion.	21
4	Authorize free Nevada State Park access to Gold Star Families.	19
5	Change NRS tax code to be retroactive to date of claim for those who obtain higher rating to reflect in property tax discount	17
6	Create specialty license plates for service designation.	17
7	Create specialty service designation(s) on handicapped plates.	15
8	Allow service animals access to State/County buildings.	13
9	Expand work opportunity tax credit to incentivize employers to hire veterans.	13
10	Expand mental health access and treatment, through legislation similar to the federal PACT Act.	10
11	Amend NRS 396.540 to authorize the Board of Regents to grant tuition remission or exemption within the Nevada System of Higher Education to the biological or adopted children of Nevada veterans who either entered U.S. military service from Nevada or were Nevada residents for five years immediately preceding application, as well as to the children of Nevada resident service-connected disabled veterans.	6
RENO Item #	10 Reno Issues Raised 3/28/2026	Total Votes #
1	Amend Nevada tax code to allow a 100% property tax exemption for service-connected veterans.	91
2	Amend NRS 396.540 to authorize the Board of Regents to grant tuition remission or exemption within the Nevada System of Higher Education to the biological or adopted children of Nevada veterans who either entered U.S. military service from Nevada or were Nevada residents for five years immediately preceding application, as well as to the children of Nevada resident service-connected disabled veterans.	62
3	Require accreditation of unaccredited claims agents through the VA.	56
4	Allow alternative treatments (like Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy) that are recognized by the VA to be State funded for service-connected veterans.	35
5	Authorize free State Park Access to Gold Star Families.	33

6	Establish additional cellular service tax/fees on cellular bills to improve 911 infrastructure and emergency response capabilities for veterans.	30
7	Create specialty license plates for affiliation, campaign ribbons, veteran supporter plates and specialized plates for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion, Vietnam, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation New Dawn, etc.	23
8	Continue state funding for the expansion and remodeling/renovation projects at the Northern, Southern State Veterans Homes, as well as construction of the new Decatur Nevada State Veterans Home.	21
9	Amend AB 338 Reintroduction of Medicaid coverage of attendant care Services for elderly people.	14
10	Amend SB 232 to remove the word “bar.”	11
Las Vegas Item #	13 Las Vegas Issues Raised 4/18/2026	Total Votes #
1	Amendment to State statutory regulations on predatory claim sharks. Get accredited agents.	145
2	Provide children of military members and veterans with expanded education benefits related to percentage of veteran disability.	94
3	Extend vehicle registration renewals to allow disabled combat veterans to receive five-year vehicle registration renewals and also provide the option to apply tax exemptions toward either property taxes or vehicle registration fees.	91
4	Speak to community healthcare partners about alternative mental health treatments to include psychedelics.	87
5	Mirror state recognition for Republic of Korea Veterans that supported the U.S. during Vietnam war. (For Benefits)	87
6	Allocate state funding to support rent caps and oversight against predatory landlords for disabled veterans.	86
7	Require state and local jurisdictions to acknowledge all military discharge classifications as veteran status for purposes of determining eligibility for benefits, rather than limiting recognition to Honorable discharges only. (Access to State & local benefits for all honorable type discharges General, Other than honorable.)	59
8	Bring lottery system to NV to offset Veteran medical hyperbaric treatments.	42
9	Provide a pathway for service-related veterans to have access to apprenticeship programs.	35
10	Provide training in community-based hospitals on cultural military competencies to be mandatory to include the judicial system.	21
11	Mirror HR4169 Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act (if passed).	16

12	Update mobile service for 911 emergency services with a fee. (do not call it a tax, call it a fee).	10
13	Expand NRS to protect legitimate service dogs.	3

5. 2026 Veterans Legislative Symposia Outcomes (FEDERAL):

a. Thirty-four (34) Federal issues were identified and will be referred to Nevada's Federal Delegation for consideration. (See TABLE C)

b. These following Federal issues are presented in the order identified by symposia participants and do not reflect a prioritization.

TABLE C
2026 Veterans Legislative Symposium
(Identified by Elko, Reno, Las Vegas Symposia Participants)
 34 Issues for Consideration by Nevada's Congressional Delegation

Item #	ELKO
1	Obtain direct phone number for Elko VA clinic. Currently it does not have a direct phone number.
2	National Legislation requiring accreditation of unaccredited claims agents.
3	Provide faster payouts, more payers for community providers as incentives.
4	Provide mobile VA care for rural and frontier communities.
5	VA central office to improve access and communication regarding registries for toxic exposures and cancers. Also utilize congressional offices.
	RENO
6	Medical support or VA clinic in Tonopah.
7	Vets that did not use the Montgomery GI bill to be able to access unused benefits that expired prior to the Forever GI Bill.
8	Extend Veterans Upward Bound to family members.
9	Identify dental needs as medical issue to make general anesthesia available for vets that need transplants.
10	Work with the VA on increasing the budget for State Veteran Home construction.
11	Online portal for Champ VA similar to Tricare and more rapid payment to providers.
12	Data sharing among Federal agencies.
13	Hyperbaric chambers as recognized treatment.
14	Provide local phone numbers to all VA clinics.
	LAS VEGAS
15	Champ VA System Access Online.
16	Forever GI Bill and Vocational Rehabilitation Education Benefits to allow all MGIB vets with a 10% service connection or higher eliminating 10 and 12-year time limits.
17	Supporting accredited SP programs for civilian providers.

18	No Federal taxes on military retirement (this will help with cost of living and with initial recruitment).
19	Study providing training to hospitals on veteran interactions with staff.
20	ADA amendment to current laws specific to service-connected disabilities (PTSD). Clearer legislation on what therapy dogs and service dogs can do and go.
21	Extend VA mileage reimbursement from 30 days to 90 days.
22	Enact Federal legislation requiring unacclaimed claims agents to become VA accredited agents.
23	Provide Neurodivergent transitioning support post military service.
24	Active service members receiving civilian medical documents not being recognized by the VA (Rural services without military medical facilities).
25	Expand North Las Vegas VA Hospital.
26	Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Treatment availability for veterans in Nevada (VA and State).
27	Standardized requirement and/or experience for medical providers with the VA.
28	Expand alternative medicine/homeopathic treatment, knowledge, and research.
29	Standardized training to HVD councilors (mandatory).
30	Access to electronic health records.
31	Prioritization of childcare for Veterans especially during periods of transitioning from military service.
32	Work on VSO Training.
33	Stand-alone Women Veterans clinic.
34	Funding the bridge: Utilize annual stipends for Vet student interns to fund the GI Bill and VRIE for the 15,000 Veterans Transitioning from medical corps military service for 2Y month training programs.

6. Report Dissemination and Availability:

a. This report is intended to document stakeholder input gathered during the 2026 Nevada Veterans Legislative Symposium series.

b. NDVS remains committed to ongoing engagement with Nevada's veteran community.

c. A copy of this report will be posted on the NDVS website and distributed to the Governor's Office, members of the Nevada Legislature, and the Nevada veteran community.

d. For additional information regarding this report, please contact NDVS Director Col. Mary Devine (Ret.) at devinem@veterans.nv.gov or Executive Assistant Mark Prizina at prizinam@veterans.gov.