



AMERICANS' PERSPECTIVES ON VETERANS ISSUES

Key Policy-focused Facts & Findings

Mission Roll Call commissioned a study of Americans' attitudes on veterans issues, including Congressional funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs, effectiveness of federal veteran policy, veteran benefits the government should provide, veterans for office, and congressional support for veterans. **Methodology:** In August 2022, Pinkston conducted an online survey of 1,988 U.S. adults, representative of the American population by gender, age, ethnicity, education, and geographic region, with a margin of error of +/-2.2% at the 95% confidence interval.

Only one-third of all Americans – and only one-quarter of those who know a veteran or active military service member – agree that Congress provides adequate funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs and that the VA uses taxpayer money effectively.

Those who know a veteran or someone currently serving are even more critical of the amount of funding and how it's spent.

% agree			
	Total	Know a Veteran	Know Current service member
Congress provides adequate funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs.	34%	25%	25%
The Department of Veterans Affairs uses taxpayer dollars effectively.	36%	28%	23%

Americans believe the federal government has “not been very effective” in dealing with the following issues that affect the veteran population.

Those who know a Veteran or someone currently serving are even more aware of the gap in federal assistance in these areas.

To what extent do you believe the federal government has <u>not</u> been very effective in dealing with the following issues that affect the veteran population?			
	Total	Know a Veteran	Know Current service member
Suicide	53%	64%	64%
Affordable housing	50%	59%	63%
Transition to civilian life	47%	53%	53%
Healthcare, incl. mental healthcare	46%	56%	60%
Employment	41%	49%	50%

The vast majority of Americans believe the federal government should provide quality and expedient healthcare for veterans. Additional benefits they think are important include higher education and tax credits.

What benefits should the federal government provide or continue to provide for Veterans?			
	Total	Know a Veteran	Know Current service member
Quality healthcare, incl. specialty care, within reasonable wait times	86%	94%	95%
Free or nearly free trade school	64%	73%	72%
Free or nearly free undergrad. education	61%	68%	72%
Federal tax ex-emption for military retirement pay	61%	70%	70%
Streamlined service and healthcare records between the DoD and the VA	58%	69%	68%
National standards for licensing and certification for military skills	52%	63%	61%

Only one-third of all U.S. adults would recommend military service to a dependent. Among those who would *not* recommend it, or are not sure, questions about benefits are a key reason (after risk of injury or death).

Would you recommend serving in the military to a dependent?			Do any of these describe why you would not recommend serving in the military?*	
	Total	Know a Veteran		Total
Yes	37%	35%	Risk of death or injury	67%
Maybe	30%	32%	Any of 4 listed benefits in the VA's control**	61%
No	33%	33%	Lack of family support/time away from family	36%
Note: only 30% of Gen Z says "yes," they would recommend military service			Policymakers supporting wars that I would not support	33%

* includes 63% of respondents who maybe or would not recommend military service, n=1,251
** the 4 listed benefits are: insufficient veteran benefits, difficulty transitioning from military to a civilian career, concern about VA healthcare, and insufficient military pay or quality housing

While opinions are mixed regarding congressional support for veterans issues, the vast majority of Americans agree that Congress should hire veterans to craft veteran policy.

Generally, my representatives in Congress care about Veterans.		Members of Congress and congressional committees should hire Veterans to craft veteran policy.	
	Total		Total
% agree	45%	% agree	74%
% disagree	21%	% disagree	4%
% unsure	35%		

Two in five Americans say they prioritize veterans affairs over abortion or infrastructure and on par with education, when considering whether to support a candidate for elected office.

Veterans have the confidence of voters. The top three reasons include loyalty to the nation, strong leadership and coalition-building skills, and because they are respectful.

When considering whether or not to support a candidate for office, what issues do you prioritize?	
	Total
the Economy	71%
Healthcare	65%
Social Security	54%
National Security	52%
Civil Rights	46%
Veterans Affairs	43%
Education	43%
Abortion	37%
Infrastructure	28%

I would be more likely to vote for a Veteran as a candidate for elected office.	
	Total
% agree	62%
% disagree	6%
Why are you more likely to vote for a Veteran for an elected office?*	
Loyalty to country	77%
Strong leadership; coalition building	67%
Respectful	60%

* includes 62% of respondents who are more likely to vote for a veteran, n=1,232