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Stand With Veterans: Support the Moral Injury Recognition and Restitution Act

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

For too many veterans, the effects of military sexual trauma (MST) persist long after their service ends. Some survivors wait years, or decades, before seeking help or filing a claim. Under current rules, VA compensation generally begins on the claim's effective date, not on the date the harm began. H.R. 7976, the *Moral Injury Recognition and Restitution Act*, would help correct that injustice.

What H.R. 7976 Would Do

If the VA approves a claim for a covered health condition resulting from MST during active service, the bill would set the award's effective date to the day after the veteran's discharge. Monetary benefits would then be paid retroactively from that date.

- **Retroactive compensation:** For an approved covered claim, benefits would extend back to the day after discharge rather than beginning only on a later claim-related date.
- **Coverage for mental and physical conditions:** The bill covers qualifying mental health conditions as well as physical injury or disease resulting in disability that was caused or aggravated by MST.
- **Clear direction for the VA:** The proposal would add a specific section to Title 38 that governs retroactive payments for these claims.

Why This Matters

Trauma can make disclosure and reporting extraordinarily difficult. Delayed claims do not mean delayed harm. When an MST-related condition is finally recognized as service-connected, veterans should not lose years of compensation simply because they needed time to come forward. H.R. 7976 recognizes this reality and seeks to align compensation more closely with the period during which the service-connected harm affected the veteran's life.

For IAM members, this is a matter of solidarity. Veterans answered the call to serve. We now have an opportunity to stand with those whose service left lasting injuries and to insist they receive the benefits they earned.

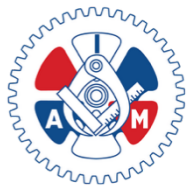
Where the Bill Stands

H.R. 7976 was introduced in the House of Representatives on March 18, 2026, and referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. On April 9, 2026, it was referred to the Subcommittee on Health. The bill remains at the committee stage, so outreach from members can help build the support needed to move it forward.

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What You Can Do

1. **Contact your U.S. representative.** Ask them to support and co-sponsor H.R. 7976 and to urge the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to advance it.
2. **Share this bulletin.** Ensure fellow IAM veterans and allies understand what the bill would change and why timely action is important.
3. **Raise the issue through IAM channels.** Encourage your Local, state council, and other Machinists legislative networks to support coordinated outreach to the House and Senate.

Suggested message: "As your constituent and an IAM member, I urge you to support and co-sponsor H.R. 7976, the Moral Injury Recognition and Restitution Act. Veterans with approved conditions related to military sexual trauma should not be denied years of compensation simply because trauma delayed their ability to file a claim. Please help advance this bipartisan veterans' measure."

Read the bill, review sponsors, and track updates at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/7976/text>.

Together, we can help ensure survivors are heard, that service-connected harm is fully recognized, and that veterans receive the compensation they deserve. Please act, share, and encourage others to do the same.

Sincerely and fraternally,

James M. Samuel
General Chair/Veterans Committee Chair

JMS/td

cc: R. Johnsen, General Vice-President, Air Transport Territory
E. Fraser, Chief of Staff, Air Transport Territory
J. Carlson, Airline Coordinator, Air Transport Territory
D142 Executive Board

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