



PROVISION OF IVF

The Issue

In September 2016, Congress granted a temporary authorization for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide in-vitro fertilization (IVF) to veterans with a service-connected condition that prevents the conception of a pregnancy. On January 19, 2017, IVF services became available through VA. In September 2018, the services were reauthorized for another two years. Constant reauthorization will be required until Congress makes the provision of IVF a permanent VA service. The uncertainty of reauthorization every two years is disruptive to the family and their financial planning. Should the authorization lapse, the ban on VA providing such assistance would be reinstated.

From 2001 to 2013, over 2,000 service members suffered a genitourinary injury, resulting in the loss of, or compromised ability, to have a child. While the Department of Defense does provide reproductive services to service members and retired service members, VA is prohibited from doing so. Since age is a factor in successful fertilization and completion of a pregnancy, delaying the provision of IVF services can have a negative effect on a veteran's success in building a family.

No group of veterans is more affected by the ban on IVF than PVA's members, who are veterans with spinal cord injuries or disorders. PVA has long sought an end to the VA ban on providing IVF. Permanently providing procreative services through VA would ensure that these veterans are able to have a full quality of life that would otherwise be denied to them as a result of their military service. Congress must pass legislation to repeal the ban on IVF and make such services a permanent part of the medical benefits package at VA. Congress has a moral obligation to restore to veterans what has been lost in service, to the fullest extent possible.

PVA's Position

- Congress must pass legislation to repeal the ban on IVF and make such services a permanent part of the medical benefits package at VA.
- Congress must authorize veterans to use donated genetic material and surrogacy in instances where their injuries prevent their ability to contribute sperm or eggs or carry a pregnancy.