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Vietnam Veterans Of America Praise PTSD Settlement

by [Michael Patrick Brewer](#) on Aug. 08, 2011, under [Veterans Benefits](#)



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Contact:

Mokie Porter

301-585-4000, Ext. 146

VVA Praises Historic Settlement For Veterans Discharged with PTSD

(Washington, D.C.) – “The National Veterans Legal Services Program and their pro bono co-counsel, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, hit a homerun with a historic class action lawsuit settlement for disabled veterans who served in Afghanistan and Iraq. As a result, thousands of veterans who were medically discharged because of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) between 2003 and 2008 will finally receive the benefits to which they are legally entitled but had been denied,” said John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). Rowan also praised Pfizer, the pharmaceutical firm, which provided free legal counseling to veterans who sought to opt into the lawsuit.

The legal action, filed in 2008, charged that the military services violated the law by failing to assign a 50 percent disability rating to more than a thousand troops discharged for PTSD, a rating that entitled the veteran to disability retirement benefits. Among the benefits these men and women will be entitled to lifetime military disability retirement payments retroactive to their date of discharge; lifetime health care for the veteran, his/her spouse and dependent children; and lifetime commissary and military post exchange privileges. The military also agreed to increase the PTSD disability rating of another thousand OIF/OEF veterans who, although they were given disability retirement benefits upon discharge, were wrongfully denied a 50 percent disability rating for PTSD.

“VVA echoes the sentiments expressed by Bart Stichman, co-director of NVLSP, who calls the settlement ‘a happy ending to a sad chapter of military mistreatment of those who served our country in time of war,’” Rowan said. “Too often, government is the adversary of, rather than an advocate for, those who have been wounded or injured while serving in uniform. VVA will continue to

fight, in Congress, in the courts, and in meetings with the leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to ensure that all veterans receive the benefits to which they are entitled by virtue of their service to our nation.

“Anyone who has served in a combat zone cannot but be affected by the experience,” Rowan said. “Often, these experiences mar them, or haunt them, for life. It is our obligation as a nation to do what we can to make them as whole as possible. Shame on us when we fail to do so.”

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is the nation’s only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA’s founding principle is “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.”

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