



## ARIZONA VETERANS' SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION

3839 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 200, Phoenix, AZ 85012

Tel: (602) 255-3373 FAX: (602) 255-1038

Website: [www.azdvs.gov](http://www.azdvs.gov)

January 18, 2023

**Katie Hobbs**  
Governor

**The Honorable Katie Hobbs**  
Governor of Arizona  
1700 West Washington Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

COMMISSIONERS: Dear Governor Hobbs:

**Kathy Gallowitz**  
Chair  
Veterans of Foreign Wars

**Philip D. Cushman**  
Vice-Chair  
Veterans of Foreign Wars

**Charles Byers**  
Commissioner  
Active or Retired Military  
Personnel

**Eugene C. Crego**  
Commissioner  
Unified Arizona Veterans

**Wyn C. Gibbs**  
Commissioner  
American Legion

**Matthew J. Kenney**  
Commissioner  
American Legion

**Kirk A. Loving**  
Commissioner  
Military Orders of the World  
Wars

**Andrew P. Meshel**  
Commissioner  
Air Force Association

**Michael D. Noble**  
Commissioner  
Marine Corps League

On behalf of your Veterans' Services Advisory Commission, congratulations on your election as Governor of the State of Arizona! We look forward to providing you the best, most informed, non-partisan advice on policy issues involving your Veteran constituents and your Arizona Department of Veterans' Services (ADVS). In accordance with A.R.S. §41-602, "The Commission shall provide policy advice to the Governor and the Director of Veterans' Services regarding Veterans' issues." Since 1951, your Commission has had a broad mission to promote public awareness and enhance the well-being of past and present Arizona service members, Veterans and their families.

Your Commission consists of nine members who represent Congressionally Mandated Veteran Service Organizations and reside within one of the three Veterans Administration regions within Arizona. In addition to our responsibilities to you, we advise the Director of Arizona Veterans' Services in management of Veteran Benefits Counselors (VBC), the State Veterans' Homes, State Veteran Cemeteries, Women Veterans, and matters pertaining to other Veteran subgroups, planning state ceremonies and memorials honoring Veterans, advocating for projects that address the needs of Veteran and pro-military/Veteran legislation. Your Commissioners have served our nation with distinction while in the military and afterwards, continuing their extraordinary service to all Arizonians. They have meaningfully served their communities as elected or appointed officials, industry leaders, small business owners, board members, advocates and are solvers of difficult problems. Enclosed please find the biographies of your Commissioners to provide insights into their qualifications, abilities and influence.

We recommend that your administration place a high priority on Veteran's issues because Veterans are powerful economic, financial and social influencers that positively shape Arizona's workplaces and communities. Indeed, research shows that Veterans are civic assets who strengthen the workforce and community. Furthermore, with more than 500,000 Veterans living in Arizona, it is estimated that nearly \$2.5 billion dollars come to the state from federal Veteran benefits and that the economic impact of Veterans spending disability compensation, pensions, educational benefits, military retiree pay and Veterans' Employment funding is more than \$5 billion each year.

Summarized in the attached memorandum, is your Commission's strategic policy objectives and legislative ideas that address prevailing issues facing Veterans and their

families. These are loosely grouped into four themes: Employment, Education, Access to Services and Support and Veterans Courts. Further detail is provided in the enclosed documents.

In conclusion, your Commission is your brain trust on all concerns affecting the Veteran community and we are proud to be on your team. We welcome an opportunity to meet with you in person to discuss priorities and legislative ideas. We are eager to partner with you to address them.

Thank you for supporting Arizona's Veterans!



Kathryn L. Gallowitz  
Chair, Arizona Veterans' Advisory Commission  
Rio Verde, Arizona  
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Enclosure (1): Memorandum: Strategic Policy Objectives and Legislative Ideas That Address the Prevailing Issues Facing Arizona's Veterans and Their Families

Enclosure (2): Biographies: Members of the Arizona Veterans' Services Advisory Commission

Enclosure (3): Arizona Veterans' Services Advisory Commission Strategic Policy Document