



# VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR, INC

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***"We're here to protest cutbacks of the VA staff, the proposed taxes on veterans' pension, an inadequate GI Bill, a lack of jobs, and no benefits for thousands of vets with bad discharges," shouted a Vietnam veteran in front of Wood VA hospital on December 18, 1974, in Milwaukee, Wisc. – from VVAW's Winter Soldier, Feb. 1975***

Dear Friends,

As early as 1973, VVAW turned its attention to the Veterans Administration (VA). At actions in Milwaukee and Chicago, VVAW members occupied their local VAs and demanded decent benefits for all vets, a single-type discharge for all vets, and universal and unconditional amnesty, among other demands. These actions intensified as VVAW made the Fight on the VA a national campaign. "Decent health care is our right: we're sick and tired and ready to fight."

***"With private industry, if you were looking for PTSD or Agent Orange, radiation poisoning, or burn pit problems, they wouldn't care."***

***– Barry Romo, VVAW, Labor Notes conference, Chicago, IL, April 7, 2018***

Now, over 45 years later, VVAW is struggling to **Save the VA** from those who wish to sabotage it and privatize it. Much has been done in the decades since the early 70s to improve the VA. The continued influx of new veterans from the US' never-ending wars of aggression, along with the aging of our generation, and our continued health problems, has proven the need for the VA now, more than ever. We must defend the VA and fight to make it what it can be.

***"One of the main reasons the Koch brothers and other ultra conservatives are pushing the narrative that the VA is broken beyond repair is that they want to promote the idea that government can do no good and that the private sector can do no harm. They are adamantly opposed to any government programs and deeply opposed to expansion of government services. They are almost apoplectic about the prospect of any kind of publicly funded, national health program (known as single payer) in the US. They devote millions to amplify any problems that occur in the VA and use even small problems to try to convince Americans that a rational tax-supported national health system would be a disaster. The VA is proof positive that publicly funded healthcare works and works really well. Yes it has problems, but those problems quickly become transparent and with enough funding and resources can be remedied." – Suzanne Gordon, The Veteran, Spring 2018***

VVAW is doing what we can. In Chicago, we are working with and supporting the Right to Heal Campaign ([www.facebook.com/RightToHealChicago](http://www.facebook.com/RightToHealChicago)), which is a model for how to mobilize labor, veterans, nurses, and others to fight to save the VA. VVAW is also supporting the important work of Fighting for Veterans Healthcare ([ffvhc.org](http://ffvhc.org)), of which Suzanne Gordon is a member. Check out videos of recent events in Chicago on the VVAW website ([www.vvaw.org/gallery](http://www.vvaw.org/gallery)). The situation is in flux, so we must remain vigilant.

**Please join us.** We hope that the lessons of VVAW will resonate with current and future generations. We know our work is not done yet. We know the importance of persistent collective action. Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper. Call your legislators. Participate and march in local and national events. Fight to save the VA. We need all of us, all of you, to take action, in whatever ways you are able.

You can also share your experiences with **Fighting to Save the VA** by writing articles for *The Veteran*, VVAW's free semi-annual newspaper. Send your submissions for potential publication to us at [vvaw@vvaw.org](mailto:vvaw@vvaw.org).

In these difficult times, we understand the demands on everyone's limited resources. **So, we are deeply thankful when our members and supporters make tax-deductible donations to VVAW's work, at whatever level.** Your donations to VVAW help us keep distributing our newspaper, *The Veteran*, to our members, friends, and supporters. Please pass out copies to your family and friends, your local library, or your local VA. Your donations also keep our website going, where we have every issue of VVAW's newspaper online as well as archives of many other articles, photos, and videos. Your donations allow us to make VVAW's legacy not only accessible to all through our website but also archive them for generations to come. We need to preserve our legacy and to be an outlet and a united voice for veterans now more than ever. **We thank all of you for your continued support.**

In solidarity,



Bill Branson  
VVAW Board member

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I am sending Vietnam Veterans Against the War \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other to support its work for peace, justice, and for decent benefits for all veterans. Donations to VVAW are tax deductible. You can also donate online at [www.vvaw.org](http://www.vvaw.org).

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