

# Veterans Benefits Disclosure: An Overview

Presentation to the Veterans and Military Affairs Commission  
September 27, 2016

# Purpose of this Presentation

- Describe the Veterans Benefits Disclosure; and
- Provide policy considerations for preventing veteran abuse in applying for benefits

# What is the Disclosure?

- Statement of federal laws, regulations, and rules governing assistance in obtaining VA benefits
- Serves as a protection for veterans against financial fraud and abuse

# Elements of the Disclosure

- A statement to the veteran that:
  1. as a claimant, he or she has rights regarding the assistance of VA benefits, including there is no charge to the claimant or a member of the claimant's family for assistance with the initial benefits application;
  2. Payment to an individual or organization for other services in assisting the claimant in benefits claims is justified and reasonable
- Information about the individual or organization providing assistance, including registration number with VA

# Policy Considerations

- Is the veteran properly informed? Does the veteran know his or her options in obtaining assistance?
- Proactive vs. reactive oversight
- Further defining appropriate versus prohibited assistance

# Key Takeaways

- The disclosure serves as a warning to veterans regarding potential fraud and abuse from groups that would charge exorbitant fees to file for VA benefits claims
- Organizations must be accredited by the VA to perform such assistance
- Policymakers should monitor the results of using the disclosure to determine if more action is needed

# Questions?