

PROVISION OF IVF

The Issue

In September, 2016, Congress passed, and President Obama signed, 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 child. On January 19, 2017, IVF services became available through VA. However, these services are set to expire on September 30, 2017, at which time the ban on IVF goes back into effect. Veterans will once again, have to bear the total cost for any attempts to have children.

No group of veterans is more affected by the ban on IVF than PVA's members; veterans with spinal cord injury or disease. PVA has long sought an end to the VA ban on providing IVF. 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 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. It is Congress that has a moral obligation to restore to veterans what has been lost in service, to the fullest extent possible. It is Congress that sends young men and women into harm's way and it is Congress that must provide the health care that meets the needs that result from that service.

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 does 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 deleterious effect on veterans' family building success.

PVA's Position:

- Congress must pass legislation to repeal the ban on IVF and make the service a permanent part of the medical benefits package at VA.