



Summary:

The following 2017 legislative goals were unanimously approved by the UVC members on December 13, 2016. They are divided into two categories: “General” and “Specific.” **General Goals** enable the UVC to take positions on specific bills during the session in advance of a vote of our members. They also inform elected officials as to the UVC’s likely position on specific proposals. **Specific Goals** address actual or proposed legislation. Both General and Specific Goals are updated throughout the legislative session by a vote of the UVC membership.

UVC Positions on Legislation:

The UVC considers each bill or budget proposal that may have a positive or negative impact on veterans, active duty service members, members of the Guard and Reserve, and their families. Based on a unanimous vote of our members, we take a position to **Support, Oppose, or Monitor** each bill that comes to our attention.

General 2017 Legislative Goals:

1. Support continued and enhanced funding of programs and benefits provided by multiple State agencies that address the needs of Colorado’s veterans, military personnel, National Guard, Reserves, and their families. This goal addresses programs in, but not limited to, the following Departments: Military and Veterans Affairs, Human Services, Labor and Employment, Revenue, Regulatory Agencies, Local Affairs, Health Care Policy and Financing, Transportation, and the Judicial Branch.
2. Support legislation to address veteran homelessness, including such efforts as affordable housing, livable wages, drug prevention, mental health care, job and career training, and education.
3. Support legislation that furthers the goal of Colorado being recognized as a veteran and military welcoming, supportive and inclusive state in tangible and meaningful ways.
4. Support legislative or budget actions that will strengthen professional and technical licensing, certification and inter-state reciprocity for those licenses or certifications for service members, veterans, and their family members.
5. Support legislation or budget initiatives to increase job training, entrepreneurship, recruitment, counseling and placement for veterans transitioning to civilian life.
6. Support legislation and funding that assists student veterans to succeed in getting fulfilling employment at a livable wage, including such efforts as peer mentoring, greater credits transference because of Portfolio Learning Assessments, and greater transference of credits between 2 and 4-year degree programs.

7. Support the provision of alternative services for PTSD & TBI that are recognized as evidence-based by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
8. Support legislation to authorize the Department of Human Services to sell additional vacant property on the campus of the Ft. Logan Mental Health Institute to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to extend the lifespan of the Ft. Logan National Cemetery, and specifying that the proceeds of the sale be dedicated to meet the current and future needs of veterans.

Specific UVC 2017 State Legislative Goals:

1. Support legislation that authorizes a state income tax exemption for military retiree pay.
2. Support legislation and provide sufficient funding to complete the construction of housing and services for veterans that has been planned for the remaining parcels of land on the campus of the State Veterans Community Living Center at Fitzsimons.
3. Support legislative or budgetary actions that increase the capacity of Veterans Courts and that facilitate the availability of such courts to veterans throughout the state.
4. Support legislation that would allow a portion of income tax collected from service members who claim Colorado as home state to go to education for student veterans.
5. Support an increase in the amount of property tax exemption for 100% disabled veterans.
6. Support legislation that provides a property tax exemption for surviving spouses of service members whose death is service-connected.
7. Amend language in the statute to expand the authorized locations for community service placement to include Veteran Service Organizations that have a 501(c)(19) or 501(c)(4) designation in addition to the currently authorized 501(c)(3) organizations.
8. Support legislation or other efforts that alleviate the burden on Veteran Service Organizations making application for and managing grant funds from the Veterans Trust Fund and Veterans Assistance Grant programs in the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs without compromising accountability and transparency.
9. Support legislation that would provide state funding for Veterans Service Officers who assist veterans with VA eligibility, claims and appeals processing and who work for nonprofit Veteran Service Organizations.
10. Support legislation that authorizes a state sales tax exemption for nonprofit 501(c)(4) Veterans Service Organizations.
11. Support legislation to reinvent and strengthen Colorado's bingo/raffles laws as part of the "Sunset" process.
12. Support legislation to continue and strengthen the role and effectiveness of the Board of Commissioners of the Veterans Community Living Centers and the State Board of Veterans Affairs.
13. Support legislation or funding that provides for the adequate maintenance and upkeep of Homelake Cemetery.

Contact Information:

Frank McCurdy
UVC President
303-981-3336
frankmccurdy@comcast.net

David Ortiz
UVC Legislative Liaison
910-705-0570
uvclegliaison@gmail.com

Richard E. Young
UVC Legislative Chair
303-388-6965
dickyoung123@gmail.com