

Introduction and Background

The contribution of the veteran to the building of this nation during its first two centuries makes clear how important the role of the veteran must and will be to the future existence and growth of our society. In the future that service may take new and different form but its significance will remain unaltered. The security of this nation is based on the commitment of those citizens who have served in the uniformed forces of our country. This contribution on their part has nearly always involved the loss of economic opportunity; often it has required the sacrifice of the veterans' health, and in many instances it has cost the supreme sacrifice, life itself. The strength and prestige of this nation depends upon this continued contribution. The future status of this country depends on the mutual obligation and commitment between the government and its citizens.

As a return to veterans for their service, the nation has accepted three basic principles as fundamental commitments to the veteran population. They may be defined generally as follows:

(1) The commitment to compensate a) disabled veterans for disability incurred in their nation's service and b) veterans' dependents for the loss of life or earning capacity of the veteran.

(2) The commitment to promote the rehabilitation and readjustment to civilian life of those veterans who have suffered physical or economic loss because of their service to the nation.

(3) The commitment to care for needy veterans who cannot be completely rehabilitated.