

SERVICE OFFICER REPORT9

11 APRIL 2019

VA ORDERED TO LIFT HOLD ON BLUE WATER NAVY APPEALS:

VA was recently ordered to lift its hold on Blue Water Navy appeals as a result of the recent Procopio v. Wilkie court decision. The VFW supported Procopio decision clarified that Blue Water Navy Vietnam War veterans are eligible to receive presumptive disability compensation benefits for health conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange. After the decision was issued on Jan. 29, 2019, VA requested a stay, which places a hold on Blue Water Navy claims and appeals while the agency deliberated whether to appeals the decision. VA's request to stay Blue Water Navy claims was denied and VA is now forced to start taking action on appeals. This means veterans affected by the Procopio decision may see activity on their appeals in the near future. The VFW urges Blue Water Navy veterans who receive notice of action on their claims to contact a VFW-accredited Service Officer at: www.vfw.org/NVS

VA TO ROLL OUT COMMUNITY CARE EXPANSION EVEN IF 'IT' SYSTEMS AREN'T READY:

Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie on Wednesday told a skeptical House Committee that his agency is sticking with the Jun 6 rollout date for expanded private health care options, even if the IT systems aren't fully in place to handle the transition.

In testimony before the House Veterans Affairs Committee, Wilkie said the Mission Act requires the new rules on access to community health care for veterans to go into effect regardless of whether the systems are operational.

He said the main concern is the "decision support tool," which aids doctors and veterans in deciding whether the best health care option is in the private sector.

"We're going to be implementing the Mission Act even if the decision support tool is a 70% or 50%," Wilkie said under questioning from Rep. Julia Brownley, D-Calif.

NEW MOBILE, ALABAMA OUTPATIENT CLINIC SET TO OPEN:

A ribbon cutting ceremony for Mobil's new VA outpatient medical clinic was held on Monday, March 18. Hundreds of Veterans and their family members joined employees and other members of the community to celebrate the occasion. Congressman [Bradley] Byrne joined Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System Director Bryan Matthews and others to formally open the clinic. Veterans began using the new clinic on Monday, March 25.

The clinic is a 65,000 square foot clinic, which is 20,000 square feet larger than its previous location. It will offer; primary care, women's health, behavioral health, audiology, home-based primary care, neurology, podiatry, optometry, orthopedics and telehealth.

YOU CAN OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ON THE NEW VA BUDGET REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 AT VFW ACTION CORPS, DATED MARCH 15th.

Commented [RF1]: etry