

U.S. Rep. Kind: Fights to raise burial allowances for veterans' families

Posted on Tuesday, Apr 24, 2018

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CONTACT: Aaron White
202-225-5506
Aaron.White@mail.house.gov

La Crosse – Today, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind co-sponsored the bipartisan Burial Rights for America's Veterans' Efforts (BRAVE) Act. The BRAVE Act will raise burial repayment funds to assist servicemembers' families with funeral and burial expenses after an eligible veteran dies.

"We promised to give our servicemembers, veterans, and families the respect and dignity they have earned and deserved, and that extends long after our veterans pass," said Rep. Ron Kind. "I'm fighting to raise the burial allowances for our veterans' families, so they can focus on celebrating the life and honoring the sacrifice of their loved one – not worry about paying expensive burial costs."

The VA's burial allowances have not kept up with the inflation of funeral and burial expenses. In 1973, the burial allowance for veterans with no next of kin and non-service-connected funeral costs was 22% of funeral and burial costs. Today, the value of this allowance has decreased significantly to roughly 2%.

The BRAVE Act will increase the \$300 for non-service connected deaths to \$749 to equal the benefit received if a veteran passes away in a VA facility. The legislation additionally indexes for inflation both the non-service and service-related passing funeral benefits, thereby eliminating the need for Congress to make further readjustments.