

WALDORF, MD – At the VFW Post 8810, in Waldorf on Saturday, September 8, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) hosted a Veterans Luncheon with the Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, Congressman Bob Filner (D-CA), and leaders of the veterans' community from across the State of Maryland. Discussions during the luncheon focused mainly on issues important to veterans, military retirees and their families, with the House Leaders touting historic investments in VA funding and action on critical veterans' legislation. In addition, Rep. Hoyer awarded attending veteran, Ronald Drinks from Mechanicsville, with medals of honor he earned during his service in Vietnam.

“Already, in the first eight months of the 110th Congress, the new majority has followed through with our pledge to honor the nation’s commitment to our veterans,” stated Rep. Hoyer. “For the first time in years the Congress has provided the VA with the requisite funding to fulfill our nation’s obligation to America’s servicemen and women, their families, and our veterans. These proud men and women to which we owe so much have fulfilled their duties bravely and honorably, and they deserve nothing less than the support of a nation that recognizes the heroic deeds they have undertaken to protect and promote the freedoms all Americans enjoy.”

This year, Congress has provided the Department of Veterans Affairs with a landmark increase for veterans' programs after years of inadequate funding, including the largest health care increase in the 77-year history of the VA as an independent agency. At the time of its passage, Hoyer hailed the bill as “one of the best veterans' bills to ever come through the House.” Aside from sufficiently funding the VA for the first time in years, the House has passed numerous pieces of legislation to better serve and meet the needs of America’s veterans. [Click here for legislative highlights of the 110th Congress.](#)

“We call our veterans ‘heroes’ for a reason, and the heroes from past wars deserve all the care and dignity that this nation can bestow,” stated Chairman Filner. “Members of the House have routinely come together in this Congress to send a clear message to America’s servicemen and women that we recognize the sacrifices of our veterans. We will continue to work boldly and tirelessly to meet the needs of all our veterans and their families.”

In addition to the legislative update, Rep. Hoyer honored veteran Ronald Drinks of Mechanicsville with a presentation of medals he earned for his brave service during active duty in the Vietnam War. Mr. Drinks worked with Rep. Hoyer’s office to obtain the following medals from the National Personnel Records Service: Army Good Conduct; Vietnam Service Medal with three Bronze Service Stars; Republic of Vietnam Campaign Ribbon with Device (1960); National Defense Service Medal; and the Expert Badge with Rifle Bar.

“Mr. Drinks served this country valiantly during a grueling military campaign in Vietnam,” stated Rep. Hoyer. “I am honored today to personally present him with these medals of valor, which are tribute to his brave service to our nation.”

Veterans also received a presentation on the Veterans History Project, a mission of the Library of Congress aimed at collecting oral history interviews, memoirs, letters, diaries, photographs, and other original materials from veterans of our nation’s foreign wars. The Project was created with legislation sponsored by Rep. Hoyer.

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