

June 27, 2017

The Honorable Tom Rooney
2160 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rooney:

ROA supports H.R. 506, "Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2017" for Title 18 to make defrauding veterans of their benefits a federal crime.

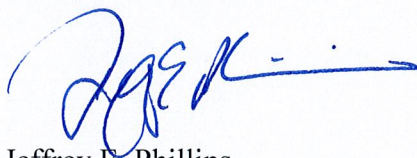
The VA administration faces increasing medical appointment backlogs making it difficult for veterans to receive their benefits in a timely fashion. Facing delayed service deliveries, veterans have become impatient and nefarious individuals have sought to take advantage of their frustration.

Those who commit fraud will, at times, falsely claim they can guarantee veterans quicker access to their benefits, all the while charging them fees for nonexistent services because the appeals process is a step-by-step process that includes requirements directed by law and formal rules in title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20. This example is illustrative, not encompassing of all the other methods persons use to defraud veterans of their hard-earned benefits.

H.R. 506 recognizes the serious nature of this grave crime and ensures it could be prosecuted at the federal level. Additionally, elevating veteran fraud to a federal crime guarantees the courts will more consistently prosecute it. This makes intuitive sense given that the federal government provides veteran benefits and, thus, fraud against veterans should be taken as fraud against the federal government.

ROA has a membership of 50,000 and is the only national military association that exclusively supports all the uniformed reserve components of the United States. Thank you for your efforts on this issue, and your support of our veterans. Please have your staff call Susan Lukas, ROA's legislative director, at 202-646-7713 or e-mail at slukas@roa.org with any question or issue you would like to discuss.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey E. Phillips
Maj. Gen., USA (Ret.)
Executive Director

