

**SHAHEEN FOR SENATE
“FIGHT”
TV :30**

AD SCRIPT

BACKUP

<p>JIM STEINER: “I’m a veteran. I signed up to fight for my country, not for my health care. Senator Shaheen gets it.”</p> <p><i>O/S: JIM STEINER / U.S. ARMY, SPECIAL FORCES / CONCORD</i></p>	
<p>PETER VELLIS: “She took on her own party...”</p> <p><i>O/S: PETER VELLIS / U.S. NAVY / BEDFORD</i></p>	<p>Senator Shaheen Authored A Bipartisan Letter With Republican Senator Kelly Ayotte To The Obama Administration In Opposition To The Obama Administration’s Attempts To Cut Funding From The Veterans Choice Card Program. “New Hampshire’s senators have asked the Obama administration to safeguard a new program that lets veterans see a doctor outside the Veterans Affairs system and have introduced legislation to make the program permanent in several states. Reacting to a request in the White House’s fiscal 2016 budget to reallocate funds for the Veterans Choice Program to other programs within VA, Democrat Jeanne Shaheen and Republican Kelly Ayotte fired off a letter to President Obama on Friday, criticizing what they say is an effort to erode a program enacted with bipartisan support in Congress. The administration’s proposal to defund the program ‘jeopardizes veterans’ access to care and undermines the principle at the heart of the program — veterans’ ability to choose where they receive care,’ they wrote. The \$10 billion Veterans Choice program was approved in August as part of a massive bill designed to alleviate lengthy wait times for veterans needing medical care. The legislation required the program to remain in place for two years after implementation. [...]Shaheen and Ayotte expressed concern that the program is underutilized because, at least in New Hampshire, it was introduced to veterans in a manner they say caused ‘confusion.’ To protect the program in their state as well as in Alaska and Hawaii — the only three states that lack a full-service VA medical center — the pair introduced legislation that, if approved, would make Veterans Choice permanent for veterans in these states. Reducing Veterans Choice card resources ‘will narrow their options and reduce access to the care they seek,’ the senators wrote to Obama. ‘That is unacceptable and inconsistent with congressional intent.’” [Military Times, 2/9/15]</p> <p>January 2016: Shaheen Called On Obama Administration VA Secretary Robert McDonald To Speed Up Payments To Health Care Providers Through The Veterans Choice Program, Saying That The Delays Were Both Inconsistent With The Law And Undermined Confidence In The Program. “U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen is asking the secretary of veterans affairs to help speed up payments to health care providers through the Veterans Choice Program. Shaheen wrote to Secretary Robert McDonald on Thursday after PainCare, which operates 11 clinics in New Hampshire, announced it will no longer participate in the program</p>

	<p>starting next month. The company cited administrative challenges and delays in reimbursements. The Veterans Choice program gives participants the option of receiving care in their local communities instead of at VA facilities. Shaheen says the reimbursement delays are not only inconsistent with federal law but have undermined confidence in the program among veterans, providers and the general public. Both Shaheen and Sen. Kelly Ayotte have expressed concerns with the program's roll-out in New Hampshire." [NHPR, 1/15/16]</p>
<p>PETER VELLIS: "... so that New Hampshire vets can get health care closer to home and outside the V.A."</p> <p><i>O/S: HEALTHCARE / FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE VETS / MILITARY TIMES, 2/9/15</i></p>	<p>Shaheen Worked To Include A Provision In The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act That Would Let NH Veterans Seek Care At Non-VA Healthcare Facilities. "The state's two U.S. senators [Jeanne Shaheen and Kelly Ayotte] worked together on a provision in the \$16.3 billion bill to overhaul the Department of Veterans Affairs that will allow New Hampshire veterans to seek health care at private and public facilities not run by the department." [New Hampshire Union Leader, 8/1/14]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaheen's Provision Would Let New Hampshire Veterans That Live More Than 20 Miles From A Full-Service VA Hospital Obtain Care Outside The VA System. "If a veteran lives more than 40 miles from a VA medical facility or community-based outpatient clinic – or more than 20 miles from a VA hospital that offers 'hospital care,' 'emergency medical services' and 'surgical care rated by the Secretary as having a surgical complexity of standard' – he or she can seek out care elsewhere and have it covered by the VA, according to the legislation. This would also apply to veterans who live in a state, such as New Hampshire, without a VA medical facility that offers all of the aforementioned services." [Concord Monitor, 7/31/14] • Union Leader: Provision Will "Mean Elderly, Ill New Hampshire Veterans Will Not Have Travel Hours To Get Medical Care Treatment" At Out-Of-State VA Hospitals. "The provision the two Senators fought to include in the bill will mean elderly, ill New Hampshire veterans will not have to travel hours to get medical care treatment at VA hospitals in Boston or White River Junction, Vt." [New Hampshire Union Leader, 8/1/14] <p>VIDEO: WMUR Report On Bipartisan VA Reform Bill That Allows New Hampshire Veterans To Get Health Care Outside Of The VA System Since The State Did Not Have A Full Service Hospital. [WMUR, 8/1/14] (VIDEO)</p>
<p>DAN PROULX: "She got tax credits for businesses to hire veterans."</p> <p><i>O/S: DAN PROULX / U.S. MARINE CORPS / HUDSON</i></p>	<p>Shaheen-Cosponsored Bipartisan VOW To Hire Heroes Act To Encourage Hiring Of Vets And Provide Education Opportunities Passed 95-0. "U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) today voted for legislation that would help veterans find jobs. The VOW to Hire Heroes Act offers tax credits to businesses who hire veterans, funds additional job training for older veterans, and makes it easier for</p>

<p><i>O/S: TAX CREDITS FOR BUSINESSES / TO HIRE VETERANS / UNION LEADER, 2/23/12</i></p>	<p>veterans to apply for federal jobs while still on active duty. The bill, which Shaheen cosponsored, passed the Senate in a vote of 95-0 and now heads to the House for consideration.” [Office of Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, 11/10/11; GovTrack, S.951, Introduced 6/29/11]</p> <p>Shaheen Highlighted A New Tax Credit She Supported To Encourage Businesses To Hire Unemployed Vets, Especially Those With Service-Related Disabilities. “A new tax credit is available to New Hampshire businesses offering job opportunities to veterans, according to U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H. Shaheen supported language in the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 to offer an expanded Work Opportunity tax credit to businesses and certain tax-exempt organizations that hire unemployed veterans. The VOW to Hire Heroes Act became law in November. The tax credit, as high as \$9,600 per veteran for businesses and \$6,240 for tax-exempt organizations, will act as an additional incentive to provide returning veterans with employment opportunities, Shaheen said. Employers who hire veterans with service-related disabilities may be eligible for the maximum credit.” [New Hampshire Union Leader, 2/23/12]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaheen Voted To Provide Tax Incentives To Employers Who Hire Veterans. In November 2011, Shaheen voted for a Tester, D-Mont., amendment no. 727 that would provide tax incentives to hire unemployed veterans. It also would encourage job training for outgoing servicemembers. It would be offset by extending, through fiscal 2015, fees on Department of Veterans Affairs home loans. [CQ; Vote 203, 11/10/11]
<p>MIRIAM CAHILL-YEATON: “Jeanne Shaheen cut through the red tape and got benefits for veterans like me and our families.”</p> <p><i>O/S: MIRIAM CAHILL-YEATON / U.S. AIR FORCE, RET. / EPSOM</i></p> <p><i>O/S: CUT RED TAPE / BENEFITS FOR VETERANS / CONCORD MONITOR, 8/2/14</i></p>	<p>Concord Monitor: Shaheen Fought For A Key Provision In The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act That Allows Veterans In New Hampshire, Which Doesn’t Have A “Full-Service” VA Medical Facility To Access Care At Private Providers Locally Rather Than Drive Long Distances To A VA Facility. “Had the Veterans Affairs reform that passed this week been around earlier, Mike Lopez – who served in Vietnam – said he might not have needed to travel all the way to White River Junction, Vt., for an operation because the procedure wasn’t available at the Manchester VA Medical Center. Bill Ryan, also a Vietnam veteran, hopes that he might be able to avoid 55-minute trip he usually takes between his Lyndeborough home and the Manchester facility. Now, Ryan said, he can go to a doctor’s office outside of the VA system and ‘could be there in 10 minutes.’ And Judy Bell, a U.S. Army veteran from Nashua, said she’s relieved to be able to seek care in an environment that’s less male-dominated and more sensitive to her needs as a survivor of military sexual trauma. [...] These and other veterans who gathered at the Merrimack VFW Post 8461 yesterday morning said the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act – which passed overwhelmingly in both houses of Congress this week – eases a significant burden on veterans who have had to travel hours to access their nearest VA medical facility and gives them more of a say in their health care overall. The law was born from an effort to respond to the widespread scheduling issues that plagued VA facilities in other states, but New Hampshire Sens. Kelly Ayotte and Jeanne Shaheen fought for a key provision</p>

that allows veterans who live in a state without a 'full-service' VA medical facility to access care at private providers." [Concord Monitor, [8/2/14](#)]

June 2019: Shaheen Joined A Bipartisan, Bicameral Letter To VA Secretary Robert Wilkie Pushing The VA To Reimburse Veterans For Erroneously Charging Hundreds Of Millions In Home Loan Funding Fees.

Shaheen signed bicameral, bipartisan letter sent to VA Secretary Robert Wilkie on June 24, 2019: "We are writing to raise our significant concerns regarding hundreds of millions of dollars in funding fees owed to our nation's veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). On June 6, the Department's Office of Inspector General (OIG) released a report, Veterans Benefits Administration: Exempt Veterans Charged VA Home Loan Funding Fees, detailing that VA owes \$286.4 million in home loan funding fee refunds to thousands of veterans participating in the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program. As part of the loan guaranty program, many veterans are exempt from paying the funding fees if they are entitled to VA disability compensation. For the estimated 72,900 veterans affected, the amounts owed by VA averaged \$4,483, with some veterans owed as much as \$19,470. Of course, this is a large amount of money for the individual veterans." [U.S. Congress, Letter to Secretary Robert Wilkie, [6/24/19](#)]

- **October 2019: The VA Said It Had Made Refunds To All Veterans Who Were Mistakenly Charged A Funding Fee On Their VA Guaranteed Home Loans.** "The Department of Veterans Affairs says it has made refunds to all veterans who were mistakenly charged a funding fee on their VA guaranteed home loans. Generally, all veterans using the VA Home Loan Guaranty benefit must pay a funding fee. That funding fee is a percentage of the loan amount, which varies based on the type of loan as well as other factors. The average funding fee the VA charged veterans during the period of inspection was \$4,483. Veterans eligible for disability compensation, as well as surviving spouses of veterans who died as a result of service-connected issues, are exempt from the fee. A June report by the VA's Inspector General said that from Jan. 1, 2012, through Dec. 31, 2017, the VA improperly charged disabled veterans funding fees despite their exempt status." [Military.com, [10/15/19](#)]

Senator Shaheen Was A Cosponsor Of S.622, The "Military Widow's Tax Elimination Act Of 2019," Which Would Repeal A Law Requiring Military Widows To Take Prorated Annuities From The Survivors Benefits Plan, Even Though They Elected To Pay Into The Program.

From the office of Senator Shaheen: "U.S. Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH) joined a bipartisan group of Senators led by Doug Jones (D-AL), Susan Collins (R-ME), Jon Tester (D-MT) and Mike Crapo (R-ID) in support of the Military Widow's Tax Elimination Act of 2019. The bipartisan bill would end the so-called 'Widow's Tax' by repealing the unfair law that prevents as many as 65,000 surviving military spouses nationwide from receiving their full Department of Defense (DOD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) survivor benefits.

Currently, military widows and widowers who qualify for the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) are forced to take prorated annuities from the Survivors Benefits Plan (SBP), even though they elected to pay into the program." [Office of Senator Shaheen, Press Release, [4/25/19](#); Congress.gov, S.622, introduced [2/28/19](#)]

- **The Bipartisan FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act Eliminated The "Widow's Tax" That Was Affecting 65,000 Military Families And Costing Some Survivor Families Up To \$1,000 A Month In Payouts.** Lawmakers are poised to get rid of the military 'widows tax' that cost some families of deceased service members tens of thousands of dollars annually in lost benefits payments because of federal accounting problems. Advocates hailed the move as a major step forward for military spouses who have faced frustration and financial hardship for years. [...] The fix is included in the compromise version of the fiscal 2020 defense authorization bill, released late Monday night. The proposal is expected to be voted on by the full House on Wednesday and the Senate next week [...] Individuals who qualify for either SBP money or DIC benefits receive full payouts from the respective programs. But family members who qualify for both are subject to an offset, where for every dollar paid out in DIC their payouts under SBP are reduced by one dollar. That costs those families up to \$1,000 a month in payouts that advocates insist they deserve. Some families have avoided the offset penalty by transferring benefits into their children's accounts, but that creates other complicated tax issues. The problem affects about 65,000 military families." [Military Times, [12/9/19](#)]

Union Leader: Shaheen "Was Remembered At The Grand Opening As Being A Key Supporter Of" Keene VA Clinic That Had Long Been Sought. "As governor, she was remembered at the grand opening as being a key supporter of the clinic and center, which Keene area veterans have been seeking for years." [New Hampshire Union Leader, 10/17/11]

Shaheen Helped Make Keene VA Clinic Possible. "Others who made it possible for the VA to open the new clinic, said LaCasse, included Keene Mayor Dale Pregent, Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., and Gordon Bristol, who helped find a location for the Brattleboro Clinic." [Brattleboro Reformer, 1/24/11]

U.S. Army Veteran James Devine Thanked Shaheen For Her Efforts At Clinic's Opening: "You've Done A Good Thing." "Friday afternoon's gray skies and rain could not dampen the joy of area veterans at the grand opening of the long-awaited U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical clinic and Veterans Center on Route 101. 'You've done a good thing. Thank you very much,' said 70-year-old U.S. Army veteran James Devine of Sullivan to Sen. Jeanne Shaheen as he shook her hand." [New Hampshire Union Leader, 10/17/11]

Keene VA Clinic Was The First Veterans Health Services

	<p>Facility In The Monadnock Region. In September 2011, the Brattleboro Reformer wrote that “the Keene CBOC is the Monadnock region’s first veterans health services facility. [...] The clinic is open to veterans, active duty personnel and members of the National Guard and Reserves who have, in the past, traveled to White River Junction, Manchester and Northampton, Mass., for medical services. [Brattleboro Reformer, 9/16/11]</p> <p>Senator Shaheen Introduced Legislation To Speed Up The Appeals Process For Veterans With Disability Claims, Saying That The VA Appeals Backlog Was “Unacceptable.” “U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen wants to speed up the appeals process for veterans with disability claims. Shaheen, D-New Hampshire, introduced legislation Wednesday requiring at least three staffers to review appeals at each of 56 regional Veterans Affairs offices. The regional offices in New Hampshire and Vermont each have only one. Shaheen said the change would reduce a backlog of appeals that grew 76 percent from 2009 to 2012. Her bill also would require the VA to report to Congress on the feasibility of increasing capacity at other levels of the appeals process. ‘I’ve heard time and again from New Hampshire veterans that have spent years waiting on their appeals and this is entirely unacceptable,’ she said. ‘The VA must do better; I’ve spoken with Secretary (Eric) Shinseki directly on this issue several times and yet we still haven’t seen the results we were promised.’” [Associated Press, 5/8/14]</p>
<p>JIM STEINER: “I’ve been a Republican all my life, but I am proud to support Senator Jeanne Shaheen.”</p>	
<p>MIRIAM CAHILL-YEATON: “She’s there for us.”</p>	
<p>JEANNE SHAHEEN: “I’m Jeanne Shaheen and I approve this message.”</p> <p><i>O/S: Jeanne Shaheen / MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE</i></p>	