

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION PRIORITIES

The institutions veterans swore to defend are under attack. Our democratic norms, our constitutional rights, and our commitment to those who served are all on the line. Common Defense members know what's at stake—they've seen what happens when governments stop serving the people they represent. The defense of democracy doesn't end with military service. This agenda reflects what our members are organizing around in the 119th Congress, and the positions we are asking elected officials to stand with us on.

OUR CORE PRIORITIES



STAND WITH VETERANS. DEFEND WITH ACTION.

Common Defense recognizes Members of Congress as *Advocates*, *Leaders*, or *Champions* based on their commitment to advancing these priorities.

END FOREVER WARS: The United States must restore democratic accountability over decisions of war and peace. Endless wars conducted under outdated authorizations undermine constitutional governance, drain public resources, and place service members in harm's way without clear purpose or oversight.

ADVOCATE

- Support restoring Congress's constitutional authority over war powers through legislation.

LEADER

- Speak out consistently against funding for unauthorized military operations.

CHAMPION

- Co-Sponsor Block the Bombs Act to condition weapons transfers based on civilian harm.

THE VA IS NOT FOR SALE: The Department of Veterans Affairs is a public institution built to serve those who served. Efforts to privatize or weaken the VA system threaten veterans' access to specialized, veteran-centered healthcare and undermine the nation's commitment to its veterans.

ADVOCATE

- Request a full accounting from the Department of Veterans Affairs on staffing reductions and their impact on veteran wait times and quality of care in VA facilities within your District.

LEADER

- Hold two in-district town halls or listening sessions on VA staffing, wait times, and access to care in 2026.
- Support funding to restore VA nursing & mental health staffing to pre-2025 levels.

CHAMPION

- Stand publicly with VA employees by participating in workforce actions or demonstrations opposing staffing cuts and threats to veteran care.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION PRIORITIES

NO WARS ON OUR STREETS: The use of federal forces in domestic operations raises urgent concerns about civil liberties, accountability, and the proper limits of executive power. Expanding DHS authorities risks normalizing militarized enforcement in American communities, blurring the line between national defense and domestic policing without sufficient oversight or clear legal guardrails.

ADVOCATE

- Vote against or oppose DHS funding without enforceable accountability measures and guardrails on domestic deployment.

LEADER

- Co-Sponsor: The National Guard Proper Use Act and the Military in Law Enforcement Accountability Act

CHAMPION

- Participate in coordinated public actions to oppose domestic militarization and elevate demands for accountability and reform.

VETERANS POWER AMERICA: Veterans have a critical role to play in building a sustainable economy that creates good jobs, strengthens communities, and addresses the climate crisis. Investments in clean energy and infrastructure can create economic opportunity while reducing the instability and conflict driven by fossil fuel dependence.

ADVOCATE

- Commit publicly to supporting veteran workforce pathways into clean energy and infrastructure jobs.
- Co-sponsor the Veterans Energy Transition (VET) Act to expand DoD-employer partnerships that place veterans in clean energy careers

LEADER

- Support streamlined permitting for utility-scale clean energy projects on federal lands, prioritizing projects that create jobs in veteran-dense communities
- Restore and expand clean energy tax credits and domestic manufacturing in sectors where veterans are overrepresented.

CHAMPION

- Pass major grid modernization and transmission investment legislation that includes renewable energy focus, prevailing wage, project labor agreements, and veteran hiring preferences.

Common Defense Civic Engagement (501c4) (CDCE) is a grassroots, veteran-led organization that was founded in 2016. We empower veterans to stand up for our communities against the rising tide of racism, hate, and violence, to organize against the entrenched powers that have rigged our economy, and to champion an equitable and representative democracy, where "liberty and justice" truly is for all.

For too long, politicians from both political parties have attempted to use veterans as unwilling political props, and Common Defense serves as a home for veterans to organize and speak for themselves and support the candidates who truly share our values.