

May 9, 2019  
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## **Congresswoman Barbara Lee Secures \$26 Million For Alameda VA Clinic and Big Wins on Military Housing and Veterans Services**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – *Today, Congresswoman Barbara Lee (CA-13), a member of the House Appropriations Committee, issued the following statement on the passage of the FY2020 Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill today:*

“The FY20 MilCon-VA funding bill honors our nation’s commitment to our veterans and military families. I am particularly pleased that this bill includes \$26 million to continue progress in the building of a state-of-the-art VA Outpatient Clinic and National Cemetery in Alameda Point, in my congressional district. This facility will serve over 100,000 veterans and is critical to ensure veterans in my congressional district receive the care they need and deserve.

“The FY20 bill also includes critical increases in funding to address suicide prevention, provide homelessness assistance, PTSD, and increased access to care for women veterans to ensure that our increasingly diverse veteran community has access to the healthcare they need. Additionally, this bill includes robust investments and oversight needed to ensure that continued improvements are being made to address claims processing backlogs.

The bill includes:

- **Military Construction**
  - A total of \$10.5 billion for military construction projects, including operational facilities, training facilities, hospitals, family housing, National Guard readiness centers, barracks, and other vital resources.
  - \$1.5 billion to fund construction, operation, and maintenance of military family housing to address family housing issues such as mold, vermin, and lead in military family housing.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs**
  - A total of \$217.5 billion funding for VA, to help address many of the problems currently facing VA and provide for better and increased access to care for our veterans. These additional funds will provide resources for important priorities within VA, such as healthcare access for women veterans, suicide prevention, claims processing, homeless prevention and care, opioid addiction, rural health, and medical research.
  - \$80.4 billion for VA medical care, providing for approximately seven million patients to be treated in fiscal year 2020. This will cover mental healthcare services, suicide prevention outreach activities, gender-specific

care for women, homeless assistance programs, opioid abuse prevention, and rural health initiatives.

- Funding to reduce the disability claims backlog, ensuring adequate compensation and care for the more than 450,000 veterans still wading through the VA bureaucracy to get a final decision on their claims.
  - Funding for programs such as: Veteran disability compensation programs for 5.3 million veterans and their survivors; education benefits for almost one million veterans; and vocational rehabilitation and employment training for nearly 150,000 veterans.
- Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) – The bill provides \$70.3 million, to support anticipated increases in personnel costs and contract cost inflation, as well as using more funds for urgently needed capital projects, such as roof replacement, elevator repair, and water and electric system modernization.
  - Oversight and Accountability – The legislation strengthens oversight and accountability at the Departments of Defense and VA to ensure taxpayer dollars are being used fully to benefit our servicemembers and our veterans. Several provisions are included to keep these agencies on track and to address problems that have wasted money and hurt critical services.

A summary of the fiscal year 2020 Military Construction-Veterans Affairs funding bill is [here](#). The text of the bill is [here](#). The bill report is [here](#).

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*Congresswoman Lee is the Co-Chair of the Steering & Policy Committee, a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, former Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Chair Emeritus of the Progressive Caucus, Co-Chair of the Pro-Choice Caucus, and a Senior Democratic Whip. She also serves as Chair of the Majority Leader's Task Force on Poverty and Opportunity.*