

## Operation Advocacy 2026: Empowering the Voices of Warriors



*Warriors gather in Washington, DC, as part of Wounded Warrior Project's Operation Advocacy 2026 Fly-In to advocate for legislation that affects veterans and their families.*

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27, 2026 – The powerful voice of veterans was heard loud and clear on Capitol Hill this week as approximately 125 warriors gathered together in Washington, DC, as part of Wounded Warrior Project's (WWP) Operation Advocacy 2026 Fly-In.

These warriors met with members of Congress and their staff to champion public policy that supports combat-injured veterans and expands mental health care and housing solutions for the veteran community. More than 140 meetings took place across the House and Senate as warriors shared their stories and urged Representatives and Senators to support three key pieces of legislation:

- **The Major Richard Star Act.** For Service members injured in the line of duty, the cost of service often lasts a lifetime, and our nation must keep its promise to those who sacrificed so much. Veterans advocated for passage of the Major Richard Star Act to ensure that veterans who were forced to medically retire due to combat or combat-related injuries receive the full retirement and disability pay that they earned.
- **The Innovative Therapies Centers of Excellence Act.** Many veterans live with serious treatment-resistant mental health conditions, including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and addiction. Psychedelic-assisted therapy (PAT) is being studied as a potential new treatment option for these veterans. Warriors will advocate for this bill that would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to create at least five Centers of Excellence to conduct research and clinical trials on treatments such as MDMA, ibogaine, ketamine, and psilocybin to help treat numerous mental health conditions.
- **The Housing Unhoused Disabled Veterans Act.** There are an estimated 32,882 veterans experiencing homelessness as of January 2024, but many veterans struggle with eligibility for federal homelessness programs due to their service-connected disability compensation, a non-taxable benefit, being considered as income, making them ineligible for support and services. Passage of this bill would remove service-connected disability from the calculation of income for eligibility for homelessness programs and ensure veterans are not turned away from these services.

In addition to meetings on Capitol Hill, warriors participated in a comprehensive advocacy training curriculum designed to

empower them as confident, effective advocates. Led by WWP staff and subject matter experts, the program combined policy briefings, storytelling workshops, professional development sessions, and practical advocacy tools, equipping warriors to engage policymakers, share their experiences with impact, and continue advocating in their communities long after the Fly-In concluded.

“My first Fly-In was in 2025, and it was a transformative experience that literally changed my career trajectory,” said Brooke Weinmann, a Naval veteran now in Laramie, Wyoming. “Coming back here a year later as a Warrior Advocate Leader, leading an incredible group of warriors on the Hill, and being able to speak out and speak up for other veterans—it’s become one of my great passions. This Fly-In has been an incredible experience, and I urge all warriors to get involved in our grassroots advocacy program!”

The grassroots advocacy work doesn’t end once the Fly-In is over. Warriors will follow up on their Capitol Hill visits by reaching out to congressional offices in their home districts and states. In addition, warriors will share their Fly-In stories with other warriors and encourage them to get involved with WWP’s grassroots advocacy work.

“Operation Advocacy puts warriors at the center of the policy conversation, giving them the opportunity to advocate directly with lawmakers for themselves and others who served,” said Adam Engelman, Grassroots and Constituent Affairs director for WWP. “By bringing veterans’ lived experiences straight into those conversations, this event helps advance Wounded Warrior Project’s advocacy mission and ensures policy is shaped by the realities that veterans face every day.”

For more information on WWP’s public policy and grassroots advocacy work, [click here](#) or email [advocacy@woundedwarriorproject.org](mailto:advocacy@woundedwarriorproject.org).

### **About Wounded Warrior Project**

*Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is the nation’s leading veterans service organization, focused on the total well-being of post-9/11 veterans, active-duty service members, and their families. Our programs, advocacy, and awareness efforts help warriors thrive, provide essential lifelines to families and caregivers, and prevent veteran suicides. [Learn more about Wounded Warrior Project.](#)*

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