

Caring for Survivors Act of 2025

Introduced by Congresswoman Jahana Hayes (CT-05) and Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (PA-01)

Background

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is a tax-free monthly benefit paid to eligible survivors of military service members who died in the line of duty or eligible survivors of veterans whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease. To qualify for this benefit, the claimant(s) must be the eligible surviving family member (spouse, child, parent) of a military service member or veteran who:

- died while serving on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training, OR
- died as a result of a service-connected injury or disease, OR
- died as a result of a non-service-connected injury or disease, and who was totally disabled from his/her service-connected disabilities for
 - at least 10 years immediately preceding death, OR
 - since the release of the veteran from active duty and for at least five years immediately preceding death, OR
 - at least one year immediately preceding death if the veteran was a former prisoner of war.

Issue

The rate of compensation paid to survivors of service members who die in the line of duty or veterans who die from service-related injuries or diseases was set in 1993 and has been minimally adjusted since then. The DIC also has rules that can drastically decrease the benefits survivors receive if they remarry or if the period the veteran was disabled before their death was less than 10 years. Other federal survivor programs do not have such stringent rules for decreasing or withholding survivor benefits.

Legislation

The **Caring for Survivors Act of 2025** matches DIC benefits to benefits in other federal survivor programs and makes sure that surviving family members get the financial help they deserve:

- Increasing the DIC for survivors from 43% (\$1,653.07) to 55% (\$2,107.22) of a single 100% disabled veteran's compensation. Military survivors currently receiving DIC will realize an approximate increase of \$454/month.
- Reducing the 10-year rule to 5 years, greatly assisting families who have had their lives put on hold by caring for a disabled family member.

Supporting Organizations

American Veterans (AMVETS), Black Veterans Empowerment Council, Blinded Veterans Association, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Fleet Reserve Association, Gold Star Spouses of America, Gold Star Wives of America, Military Family Advisory Network (MFAN), Military Order of the Purple Heart, National Military Family Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors (TAPS,) and Vietnam Veterans of America.