



Paralyzed Veterans of America

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Chartered by the Congress of the United States

April 13, 2015

Ms. Nancy Kessinger
Veterans Benefits Administration (20M33)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

RE: OMB Control No. 2900-0826

Dear Ms. Kessinger:

Paralyzed Veterans of America is writing to provide comment on the notice published by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding VA Form 21-0966. This form is used by claimants and/or their authorized representatives to indicate an intent to file a claim for compensation and/or pension, or survivors pension and/or Dependency and Indemnity Compensation. The notice was officially published for comment on February 10, 2015.

The information VA is collecting through VA Form 21-0966 is the result of VA's new standardized claims forms process. While we have serious reservations about this process, we want to ensure that the information collected through this form clearly notifies VA of a veteran's, dependent's or survivor's intent to file a claim for benefits. Although not directly related to the information collected on this form, we also want to make sure that any VA follow up subsequent to the form clearly notifies the claimant, and the accredited representative of record if applicable, that the onus is on the claimant to file a fully developed claim for benefits.

After reviewing VA's form, we have a few comments and suggestions that we believe will help clarify the information collected on VA Form 21-0966:

- Section I: General Benefit Election. The box to be checked by the surviving dependent of a veteran should be edited to include reference to accrued benefits. Thus, we believe that the election should read, "Survivors Pension, Dependency And Indemnity Compensation (DIC), And/Or Accrued Benefits."
- Section II: Claimant's Identification, Item 7. This question should be edited to add a box that says, "Unknown," as some veterans or their survivors may not know whether a claim has ever been filed with VA.

- Section II: Claimant's Identification, Item 8. This item should be edited to say "if known" as some survivors and veterans may not know this information.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this notice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Homer L. Townsend". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "H" and a long, sweeping "T" at the end.

Homer Townsend
Executive Director
Paralyzed Veterans of America