



# Town Hall Meetings 2008

Event & Location	Date	Attendance
<p><b>Dale City</b> VFW Post 1503</p>	<p>April 2, 2008</p>	<p>Approximately 25 Secretary Marshall, Senators Puller and Parker; Delegates Lingamfelter and Nichols, Gwenn Sigda representing Senator Webb</p> <p>JLC Rep: Jenny Holbert</p>
<p><b>Galax</b> Crossroads Institute (VFW)</p>	<p>April 8, 2008</p>	<p>Approximately 25 Secretary Marshall, Angel Hall for Delegate Nutter, Gwyn Dutton for Senator Webb</p> <p>JLC Rep: Dan Boyer</p>
<p><b>Front Royal</b> American Legion Post 53</p>	<p>April 9, 2008</p>	<p>Approximately 25 Secretary Marshall, Gwenn Sigda representing Senator Webb</p> <p>JLC Rep: Dale Chapman</p>



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<b>Salem</b> American Legion Post 3	April 17, 2008	Approximately 25 Secretary Marshall, Wanda Hancock representing Congressman Goodlatte  JLC Rep: Frank Sherman; BVS Rep: Pat Green
<b>Richmond</b> American Legion, Department of Virginia	April 28, 2008	Approximately 25 JLC Reps: Sam Wilder, Dale Chapman; BVS Reps: Paul Galanti, Thad Jones
<b>Norfolk</b> VFW Post 4809	April 30, 2008	Approximately 40 Senator Northam; Delegates Bouchard, Mathiason, and Puller; Andrea Trotter representing Senator Webb's office  JLC Reps: John Bonnell, Bill Townsley, Jim Aucion, Dan Miller



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- Meetings began with exhibitors and one-on-one conversation
  - Virginia Department of Veterans Services
  - Virginia Employment Commission
  - Quantico National Cemetery
  - Hillsville CBOC
  - Independent Living Centers
  - Brain Injury Services
  - Culpeper National Cemetery
  - Salem, Richmond, and Hampton VAMCS
  - Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve



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- Facilitated discussions—questions raised:
  - Concern that veterans diagnosed for TBI at the Salem VAMC are being referred to McGuire VAMC in Richmond and are not compensated for travel. Is there anything the Commonwealth can do to help?
  - Can building of the Dublin Cemetery be put on the fast track?
  - Concern that taps is being played on boom boxes at the funerals of Vietnam veterans and that the people folding the flag do not know how to fold it correctly.
  - Concern about 18-month turn around time for claims processing by the VA.
  - Need for a counselor in Galax. Vietnam Veterans of America is willing to provide the building and transportation for veterans.
  - Concern that veterans become frustrated with the system and simply give up trying to access their benefits.
  - Concern that veterans classified as Priority 8 are not eligible for VA health care.
  - What GI Bill benefits do members of the Guard and Reserve have?



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- Facilitated discussions—questions raised (continued):
  - Timeframe for applying for a service connected disability as a result of exposure to Agent Orange.
  - Concern about lack of knowledge, understanding, and support for veterans from non-veterans.
  - Need to educate veterans, especially disabled veterans, about the importance of life insurance.
  - Need for outreach to law enforcement so that veterans with impulse control issues don't end up in the criminal justice system.
  - Need to get information about benefits to the spouses and families of veterans.
  - Why aren't there programs for veterans' spouses?
  - Concern on the part of the VA that Afghanistan and Iraq veterans are not coming in to the VA.
  - Concern about the lack of a definitive list of resources.



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- Consistent theme: need for communication and to get information out to veterans and their families. Suggestions included:
  - Wounded Warrior Initiative promotion
  - Connecting with 211
  - Articles for VSO newsletters
  - Tear out sheet with resources for VSO newsletters
  - Presentations at TAP about benefits and services
  - Traditional advertising—Newspapers, TV, radio
  - Flyers



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- Actions DVS will take:
  - Wounded Warrior promotion
  - 211
  - Tear out sheet with resources for VSO newsletters
  - Articles for VSO newsletters
  - List serve
  - Virginia news clips to VSOs
  - Additional news releases on topic such as Agent Orange exposure