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POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION

Commissioner Robert Taub, Chairman
Commissioner Michael M. Kubayanda, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Mark Acton
Commissioner Ann C. Fisher
Commissioner Ashley E. Poling

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue, NW Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the DAV (Disabled American Veterans), and the more than 4 million ill and injured veterans and their family members who DAV serves, I am writing to urge you to reconsider your five-year proposal to increase postage rates several times the rate of inflation. These increases, estimated to reach up to 50 percent, will negatively influence the programs and services that DAV has to offer our nation's heroes.

The use of direct mail, primarily nonprofit marketing mail and first class business reply mail, is vital to our organization's ability to build awareness, raise funds, and fulfill our charitable purpose. Direct mail generates more than 80 percent of DAV's annual donations and more than 80 percent of its membership dues. In 2018, DAV spent nearly \$11.3 million on standard postage, over \$1 million on periodical postage, and over \$8 million on first class postage stamps for return mail. We also spent approximately \$200,000 on business reply postage for return mail and generated more than \$500,000 in additional first class return postage.

The need for DAV's services to assist our nation's veterans, and the central role that direct mail plays in providing those services, is greater than ever. As you know, our nation's military continues to engage in conflicts globally, while our service men and women are increasingly surviving catastrophic injuries due to medical advances, even as recent as earlier this month, in Iraq. Our newer services and programs include:

- career fairs and employment opportunities to more than 172,000 attendees;
- expansion of rehabilitation events;
- programs for children of ill, injured, and fallen veterans;
- mentor retreats;
- veterans entrepreneur grants;
- an electronic database that connects concerned citizens with volunteer opportunities to assist veterans and caregivers;
- benefits information seminars in rural locations, businesses and college campuses.

DAV's newer programs supplement our services to care for more than 1,000,000 veterans annually. However, having existed for a century and supported veterans of all war eras, DAV has made a significant impact in veterans' lives by providing:

- professional representation for 11,500,000 claims for earned benefits;
- transition service seminars;
- more than \$12,800,000 in disaster relief;
- more than 19 million rides have been provided, transporting veterans more than 734 million miles.

DAV would not be able to increase our budget to keep pace with postage increases totaling up to 50 percent over the next five years. Any expense, such as postage, that exceeds our means will result in necessary reductions in our use of mail. This will hurt our ability to raise support and connect veterans with our services. It will significantly decrease the scope of programs and services that our nation's most vulnerable heroes have relied upon for justice and hope for the last century.

DAV strongly urges the Postal Regulatory Commission to reconsider its proposal.

Sincerely,



J. Marc Burgess
National Adjutant/CEO