

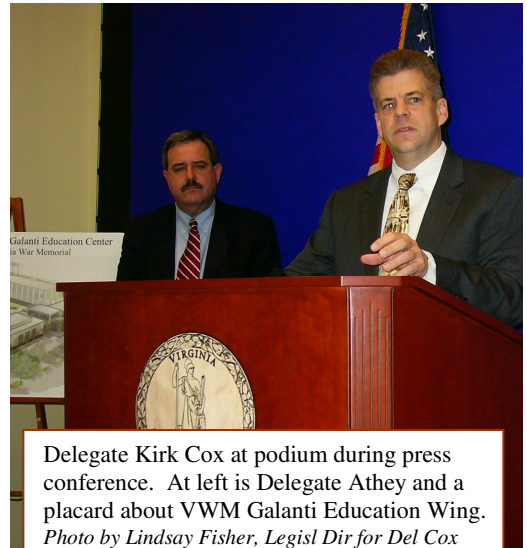
USE THE NEW VCOC MOAA
LEGISLATIVE ALERT SYSTEM
To Email State Legislators

Find the link on the State Legislative section of VCOC website or you can simply go directly to the alert website:

<http://vavet.org/>

You may also contact your chapter VCOC Legislative Rep for info about legislative priorities and the alert system, developed by VCOC Legislative Committee Vice Chair for State Legislation – John Clickener, LTC, USMC, Ret

Use of the alert system is a VCOC leadership objective for 2010.



Delegate Kirk Cox at podium during press conference. At left is Delegate Athey and a placard about VWM Galanti Education Wing. Photo by Lindsay Fisher, Legisl Dir for Del Cox

PRESS CONFERENCE

House Supports Our State Legislative Objectives

On 10 Feb 2010 (a bad weather day), Delegate Kirk Cox, House Majority Whip and Vice Chair of the House Appropriations committee and several other Delegates, held a press conference to promote and support Legislative Priority Objectives of the Joint Leadership Council (JLC) of Veterans Services Organizations (VSOs). The weather conditions had an impact upon media coverage but the VSOs and other agencies (Department of Veterans Services and Virginia War Memorial) turned out at the conference, showing appreciation for this support by members of the General Assembly. Joining Delegate Cox were Delegates O'Bannon, Stolle, Athey and Carrico.

Delegates provided justification supporting each objective. When one considers the fiscal issues faced by the Commonwealth, this level of support from the House of Delegates shows how this body respects the needs/requirements of our military community.

VCOC members at the press conference included: John Clickener (Potomac Chapter & VCOC legislative committee Vice Chair for State & VCOC's Alternate JLC Rep), Jon Hatfield (VWM-Richmond Area Chapter - RACMOAA), Steve Combs (DVS & RACMOAA), Gen Steve Huxtable (Va. Nat Guard & RACMOAA), Bill Flanagan (Southside Virginia Chapter and a past president of VCOC) and Don Kaiserman (VCOC 1st VP and Legislative Chair). Other JLC VSOs included: American Legion, VFW, plus Gen Newman Va.A.G. **JLC chairman, Col Dan Boyer**, USAF, Ret, did a superb job at the press conference, explaining the JLC process of determining priority objectives.

Following the conference, the attendees made a point to express their appreciation by meeting with the speakers. As stated in other articles, we feel that progress has been made to gain potential passage of a number of Virginia JLC objectives in the current session of the Assembly.

/Don Kaiserman, Col, USA, Ret VCOC 1st VP & Legislative Chair

STATE LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES COVERED:

1. Real Estate Tax Relief for 100% Disabled Vets
2. Funding Veterans Services Budget including:
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWMP),
Automated Claims System for veterans disability claims,
New State Veterans Cemetery in S.W. Virginia
3. Virginia War Memorial (VWM) funding
4. Burial Vaults for State Veterans Cemeteries
6. Elimination of income tax (Federal and State) on distribution of funds to family members of deployed Guard/ Reserve members needing funds - emergency situations.

See VCOC website VirginiaMOAA.com State Legislative Section for more on state legislative objectives (including the 5th objective concerning court programs) and links to JLC & General Assembly websites.

PUBLICITY Can Further our Legislative Agenda

Publicity about our legislative activism attracts interest and action by others. It also generates membership (chapter and national), which in turn gives us a **more powerful voice** for our legislative efforts. We've had great success with communication awards in Virginia. Let's do even better in 2010, with local media. One of the first steps is to have a person in charge of news releases at each chapter – A Public Affairs Officer (PAO). We've already doubled the number of chapter PAOs compared to last year. The PAO will need input from subject-matter-experts, such as your **Legislative Committee concerning the Congressional Luncheon or Storming Richmond**. The news release templates from VCOC can help - chapters fill in the blanks with local facts/stats/quotes and send (with a photo) to civilian and military newspapers. See the Insert-B page for Public Affairs Leadership Objectives. Having reporters at our key legislative events is one of the objectives developed by the VCOC. Please publish a legislative news story in a local paper in your local area (and don't forget to report any publicity successes in quarterly reports (new format).

/Melva Mallison, Maj, USAF, Ret, VCOC 2nd VP & PAO