



# CONGRESSMAN TED DEUTCH

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## ***Congressman Ted Deutch Introduces Bipartisan Holocaust Survivor Claims Resolution***

Congressman Ted Deutch (D-FL), a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, has introduced legislation urging the German Government to fulfill its moral responsibility to Holocaust Survivors and urgently provide the financial resources necessary to ensure that Survivors live in dignity and comfort in their remaining years. Representatives Deutch and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Senators Bill Nelson (D-FL) and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced the resolution together last month.

This resolution affirms the commitment of Congress to ensuring those needs are addressed by urging the German Government to make a financial commitment that would ensure every Survivor may live out his or her life in dignity. As a result, the Germany Government is engaged in new rounds of negotiations with the Claims Conference to address these existing gaps in funding.

“Every year, as Survivors age, their needs grow,” said **Congressman Deutch**. “Tragically, more and more are falling into poverty and lack the funds to cover essential needs. Right now, we are facing a unique and critical moment in history with this high-level negotiation moving forward. Germany can make a major difference in the lives of so many Holocaust survivors who are struggling in their later years.

“As we prepare to observe Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, on May 5, we should honor the memory of the six million Jews and millions of others who perished by ensuring that the urgent needs of Holocaust survivors – medical care, home care, and mental health care – are fully met. That is why I introduced this resolution.”

### ***The New York Times***

#### ***As Holocaust Becomes More Distant, Survivors' Needs Intensify***

“With an estimated 100,000 Holocaust victims living in the United States, roughly a fifth of survivors worldwide, their plight has raised concern in Congress, and on Thursday representatives introduced a resolution calling on the German government to do more.”



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## Deutch, Rooney Veterans Bill Passes House

The Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act, authored by Congressman Ted Deutch (D-FL) and Congressman Tom Rooney (R-FL), passed the House of Representatives last month with unanimous bipartisan support.

A despicable breed of financial predators have been advertising themselves to the veterans community claiming that, for a hefty fee paid by the veteran, they can speed up the claims process with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Although it is illegal under existing law for anyone who is not an approved agent to charge a fee for helping a veteran with a claim or an appeal with the VA, there is no criminal or financial penalty associated with breaking the law. The Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act will both deter and penalize fraudsters that blatantly engage in a scheme to defraud a veteran (or his or her survivor or spouse) of his or her benefits by imposing a fine, imprisonment of up to five years, or both.



*Rep. Deutch speaks about the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act at a House Judiciary Committee hearing.*

“It is a testament to the pressing and bipartisan nature of this issue that congress swiftly and unanimously passed this legislation into law,” Deutch said. “Defrauding vulnerable veterans by going after their hard-earned pensions with false claims of additional benefits is despicable, and this law now makes it a punishable offense.”

In one case, after attending a briefing a scammer filed inaccurate claims on behalf of a veteran that did not include spousal income. After the veteran paid excessive filing fees of over \$600 for a service the county VSOs provide for free, the VA eventually learned that the veteran was not eligible and billed the veteran for nearly fifty thousand dollars in overpayments. Meanwhile, the scammer had disappeared and could not be contacted.

Veterans and survivors entitled to benefits can contact the information provided on this VA postcard to learn more about avoiding scams. Organizations are available to assist veterans with filing a VA pension claim, free of charge.

Constituents can also contact Congressman Deutch’s office with questions regarding VA claims:

**561-470-5440**  
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A VA postcard with a blue header that reads "DON'T BE A VICTIM: BE AWARE OF PENSION POACHING SCAMS". The text on the card states: "The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pension exists to help financially disadvantaged wartime Veterans and their survivors. Individuals and organizations are available to help you file a VA pension claim free of charge. A searchable list of VA-accredited representatives including Veterans Service Organizations, agents, and attorneys is available at the VA Office of General Counsel website: www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp." Below this text is a QR code and the instruction: "To get more information about VA pension, visit www.benefits.va.gov/pension or call 1-800-827-1000." The bottom of the card features the VA logo and the text "U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs". On the right side of the card is a photograph of an elderly woman with grey hair, looking thoughtful with her hand to her chin.