



COCONINO COUNTY ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

We serve the public by advocating for justice.

WILLIAM P. RING
COUNTY ATTORNEY

JANE NICOLETTI-JONES
CHIEF DEPUTY ATTORNEY

TAMI M. SUCHOWIEJKO
SENIOR MANAGER

DEPUTY ATTORNEYS

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The Honorable Senator Jeff Flake
Judiciary Committee, United States Senate
413 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

March 2, 2017

Re: *Veterans Court Improvement Act of 2017*

Dear Senator Flake,

On behalf of the Coconino County Attorney's Office I am writing to offer our strong support for the *Veterans Court Improvement Act of 2017*.

Our jurisdiction is an early adopter of alternative resolution courts for justice-involved Veterans. This was done in recognition of two principle facts: (1) Veterans are uniquely situated to understand and appreciate the experience of honor and discipline in service to our Nation; and (2) Through powers of recollection we can utilize that foundation, which was once instilled, to return a sense of honor and to then empower the Veteran to do what is needed, what is right, and what justice requires. Our *Veterans Court* is a diversionary court and an alternative to standard criminal prosecution. We form a Justice Team around the Veteran composed of the judge, prosecutor, public defender and a Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist. *When presented with a menu of coordinated services from the VA and the Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist a successful graduate has seized the opportunity to change their lives.*

Of course, success depends wholly upon the availability of a Veterans Outreach Justice Specialist in our rural area. Your Bill assures continuation of our programming and we strongly endorse it.

Before closing it is important to recognize the work of three individuals in our program who represent the VA or assist our program Veterans. They are VJOS Mark McLaughlin, VRC Mike O'Donnell, and Mr. Terry Couch. I want to thank these gentlemen for their service. If you should need further information on our program or testimony in support of your Bill, please feel free to contact me and I will do all that is necessary to return to Washington, to explain our experience and positively support the programming.

Very truly yours,

William P. Ring
Coconino County Attorney



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Cc:

Raymond C. Kelley, Director
VFW National Legislative Service
VFW Memorial Building
200 Maryland Avenue N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Commander Robert Noel
Mr. Rex Sturmer
VFW Post 1709 San Francisco Peaks
409 W. Santa Fe Avenue
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Commander JT Thompson
The American Legion
Mark A. Moore Post #3
204 W. Birch Avenue
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Northern Arizona Veterans Resource Center
1515 E. Cedar Avenue
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001