

VETERANS FOR CHRIST, INC.  
P.O. BOX 362234  
DECATUR, GA. 30036



July 2023

## Driving Towards Change: Documentary Premiere

I am a Disabled Vietnam Veteran and former Chrysler Executive for 25 years. After retiring in 2002, I decided to return back to work and formed Premier Automotive Export company. My ultimate goal was to sell USA electric vehicles to The Republic of Cuba. Cuba is the last and largest virgin car market in the world with a land mass the size of Florida and a population of 11.5 Million. In November of 2022, The Biden-Harris Administration approved the very first export license in the USA to sell electric vehicles to Cuba. Here is the link and attached Press Release for your review: [www.DrivingTowardsChange.com](http://www.DrivingTowardsChange.com)



Filmmakers Peter and Pamela McNeil help tell the incredible story of John C. Felder's accomplishments in the automotive industry as an advocate for the accessibility of electric vehicles in the Caribbean. *Driving Towards Change* focuses on the culmination of John's

efforts, spanning 15 years, that lead him to make history as the first recipient of a license by the U.S. government to sell electric vehicles to the island of Cuba. This marked one of the first major events in Cuba's transportation industry since the U.S. imposed a trade embargo in 1961.

John Felder is the President, CEO and founder of **Premier Automotive Export Ltd.**

We invite you to celebrate the premiere of John's unprecedented journey as an American businessman and advocate for a healthier, sustainable environment.

## **BLACK TIE DOCUMENTARY PREMIERE**

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AUGUST 26, 2023, 5-10PM

MERRIWEATHER LAKEHOUSE HOTEL  
10209 WINCOPIN CIRCLE, COLUMBIA, MD 21044

A reception with refreshments will follow.  
To book a room at the hotel under our exclusive event rate, click [here](#).

### **Veterans set to see cost-of-living increase to their benefits**

On June 14, 2023, President Joe Biden [signed](#) into law the Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Act of 2023, which directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide a cost-of-living adjustment for Veterans benefits in 2024 equal to the COLA applied to Social Security benefits, as determined by the Social Security Administration (SSA).

The legislation, passed with bi-partisan support in the House and Senate, is an annual procedure for Congress but an important one, as it must be accomplished to ensure Veterans receive a COLA, and that it keeps pace with inflationary costs.

## **Which VA benefits will increase?**

The COLA will affect certain VA benefits including, but not limited to: disability compensation, clothing allowance and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) for spouses and children. While the exact amount of next year's adjustment has not been determined, it's based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI measures the average change in prices of goods and services to preceding years and is used by SSA to determine the annual COLA, which, by law, now applies to VA benefits as well.

The last adjustment in January 2023, which Veterans are currently receiving, saw an 8.7% [increase](#) following a second year of high inflation.

## **When can Veterans expect to see the adjustment?**

Based on the timeline of previous years, SSA is expected to announce its 2024 COLA early in the next fiscal year, which begins on Oct. 1. VA will then set its compensation payment rates to match and Veterans can expect to see the new amounts starting with their January 2024 payment. To stay informed on when the COLA is announced and what it will mean for your VA benefits, subscribe to the [#VetResources](#) newsletter and [#theSITREP](#) podcast, where that topic and many more of interest to Veterans are discussed.

## **Appealing your health care decisions**

If you disagree with a health care decision, you have options

As a Veteran, you deserve the best health care possible. But you may not always agree with decisions we make about your medical care or whether you are eligible for some types of care.

If you disagree with a decision we made, you can appeal it. Here's how.

First, a word about where benefits come from within VA. The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) handles non-health benefits, including service-connected compensation, education, dependency and indemnity compensation, VA home loans and life insurance. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) also has its own set of health benefits involving your health care and eligibility for certain health services.

To learn more about VBA benefits, please visit its [website](#).

## **Two kinds of health care decisions, two kinds of appeals**

In VA health care, you can appeal two kinds of decisions: medical determinations and health benefits decisions.

A medical determination is a decision made by your care team about your health care, like whether to prescribe a certain medication, treatment or physical therapy. It can also mean a decision to refer you to a community provider for care.

A health benefits decision is about whether or not you are eligible for VA health benefits, such as VA health care, VA nursing home and domiciliary care, reimbursement for non-VA emergency care and certain medical devices.

## **How to appeal a medical determination**

You can appeal a medical determination by filing a Clinical Appeal, which allows other medical professionals to review your medical needs and decide whether the determination was correct.

To file a Clinical Appeal, contact the patient advocate at your VA medical facility and ask to initiate a Clinical Appeal.

## **Find your local patient advocate here.**

## **How to appeal a health benefits decision**

If you disagree with a health benefits decision, you can request one of three types of review:

- Higher-Level Review
- Supplemental Claim
- Appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals

You can select the type of review you think is best for your case.

## **When and how to request a Higher-Level Review**

If you believe our decision was wrong and you don't have new evidence, a Higher-Level Review may be your best option. You can't submit any new evidence, but instead a senior reviewer will look at your case again. This reviewer will evaluate the same evidence that was previously considered. You must file a request for Higher-Level Review within one year of the date of your decision.



You can also request an optional, one-time informal conference with a senior reviewer to discuss your case.

To request a Higher-Level Review, fill out VA Form 20-0996 and follow the submission instructions on your VHA decision notice letter.

### **Download VA Form 20-0996.**

#### **When and how to file a Supplemental Claim**

If you believe our decision was wrong and you have new and relevant evidence that VA hasn't already considered, a Supplemental Claim may be your best choice. We can help you gather any new evidence you identify, such as medical records, to support your claim. A reviewer will decide if this new evidence changes the decision. You can generally file a Supplemental Claim at any time after the decision.

To file a Supplemental Claim, fill out VA Form 20-0995 and follow the submission instructions on your VHA decision notice letter.

### **Download VA Form 20-0995.**

#### **When and how to appeal to the Board**

If you want a Veterans Law Judge at the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) to review your case, you may appeal the decision to the Board. You must file a Board appeal within one year of the date of your decision and you do not need to request Higher-Level Review or file a Supplemental Claim before appealing to the Board.

There are three types of Board review. When you fill out the form, you'll need to request which type you want:

- Direct Review: If you don't want to submit additional evidence or have a hearing
- Evidence Submission: If you want to submit additional evidence without a hearing
- Hearing with a Veterans Law Judge: If you want to have a hearing with a Veterans Law Judge with the option to submit new evidence

To appeal a decision to the Board, fill out VA Form 10182 and send it to the Board. The mailing address is in the form.

## **Download VA Form 10182.**

### **How to appeal a Caregiver Support Program decision**

If you disagree with a decision about care or services under the VA Caregiver Support Program (CSP), you have four options. You can file a Clinical Appeal, or you can choose any of the three benefits decision appeals options. For more information, review your CSP decision letter or visit the CSP [website](#).

### **How to find help with an appeal**

If you need help filing a claim or appeal, you may want to work with an accredited attorney, a claims agent or a Veterans Service Officer (VSO). We trust these professionals because they're trained and certified in the VA claims and appeals processes. They can help you with VA-related needs.

VSOs work on behalf of Veterans and service members, as well as their dependents and survivors. [Find out more about professionals who can help you.](#)

### **For more information**

Visit the [VHA appeals website](#) for more information.

“Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, being men of courage, be strong.” 1Cor 16:13

Sincerely,

*William A. Harris, Jr.*

William A. Harris, Jr., USAF Retired  
President, Veterans for Christ, Inc.

[www.veteransforchristinc.org](http://www.veteransforchristinc.org)

## **Need to contact VA?**

Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, Chat, or Text 838255

Homeless Veteran Resources: 1-877-424-3838 or Chat

White House VA Hotline: 1-855-948-2311

1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411) is never the wrong number