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By U.S. Rep. Charles F. Bass, Patch.com  
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Every day, I am reminded of the bravery and selflessness of the countless men and women from New Hampshire and across the nation who have donned the uniform to keep us free, safe, and secure. During the 13 years that I've had the honor of representing New Hampshire's Second District in Congress, I've had a chance to meet many of these men and women and hear their stories.

But perhaps the greatest, and one of the most important, parts of my job is being able to help resolve issues with the federal government for a veteran or member of the armed services. One case in particular touched the hearts of me and my staff and reinforces why I enjoy my job so much.

Recently, my office was contacted by Deanne Fredette of New London. Her father, Jose Luis Carrero Figueroa, is a veteran of the Korean War who has tried since his discharge from the U.S. Army in 1952 to obtain the two service medals to which he was entitled.

After being told repeatedly that there was no record of Jose's military service, Deanne turned to my office for help. After some digging, we discovered that his name was listed incorrectly and his records were lost in a fire at the National Personnel Records Center in the 1970s. We were able to obtain Jose's proper documentation and determine that he was entitled to not two, but five service medals.

Nearly 60 years later, Deanne was able to present her father with the medals he so cherished earlier this week. Jose announced that he will give the medals to his granddaughter so she can pass on to others and future generations what he and his comrades did in Korea so many years ago.

Stories like Jose's reaffirm my commitment to those who have served and continue to serve our nation. We honor the innumerable sacrifices they have made to protect and preserve our freedoms on days of remembrance like Veterans Day, but we must resolve to honor their sacrifices and service year-round.

To that end, I have been proud to work with members of the New Hampshire veterans' community to advocate for legislation that will continue our nation's commitment to our veterans. I have formed two advisory committees – one for military issues and the other focused on veterans issues – comprised of New Hampshire's most respected and experienced current and former armed services personnel. Working with these two groups, I have introduced legislation to preserve the dignity of military funerals by limiting disruptions (H.R. 1591) and to create a nationally-recognized voluntary military service identification card (H.R. 3293). And the New Hampshire Congressional Delegation and I will continue to push for the creation of a full-service VA hospital in our state – the only state in the nation without one – or ensure that New Hampshire veterans can receive comparable care at hospitals throughout the state.

Aside from legislative initiatives, there are hundreds of Granite Staters working every day to change lives of New Hampshire veterans. Organizations such as the Easter Seals Veterans Count program and Liberty House provide shelter, job training, and other services for veterans and their families. Their efforts often go unrecognized and they too deserve our thanks and appreciation for their commitment to serving those who have served.

Our work is not done and there are many more issues that need our attention, but I am proud to work with these individuals to ensure New Hampshire's veterans receive the care and benefits they have earned and deserved. And my staff and I stand ready to assist any constituents – like Deanne Fredette and her father – who are having trouble dealing with a federal agency like the VA. I encourage you to contact my offices in Nashua (603-595-7701) or Concord (603-226-0064) if we can help.

To Jose Luis Carrero Figueroa, and the more than 128,000 veterans residing in New Hampshire – thank you for your selfless service to our state and nation. We all owe you a debt of gratitude that we can never truly repay, but we will continue fighting for you as you have fought for us.