



## Enhancing Veteran Protection Against Scams and Fraud – A Perspective from Veterans Bridge Home

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Veterans Bridge Home (VBH) acknowledges and values the significant efforts of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in addressing the critical issue of scams and fraud targeting Veterans, as highlighted during the recent presentation at the North Carolina Statewide Community Veteran Engagement Board (CVEB) meeting on February 6th. As a thought leader in the Carolinas, serving Veterans, service members, and their families, VBH aims to complement these efforts by providing our perspective on enhancing protections against such predatory activities. This white paper discusses the insights gained from the VA's presentation, outlines the challenges faced by Veterans, and proposes strategies to bolster their defense against scams and fraud.

In an era where scams and fraudulent activities are increasingly sophisticated, Veterans often find themselves as specific targets due to their unique position and benefits. The recent VA presentation to the NC CVEB has shed light on the various dimensions of this issue, emphasizing the need for heightened awareness, education, and action to protect our Veterans. VBH, with its mission to bridge the gap between Veterans and their communities, is uniquely positioned to offer added insights and resources to this critical conversation.

The VA's presentation underscored several prevalent scams targeting Veterans, ranging from healthcare fraud to benefits theft. These scams not only pose financial risks but also have profound emotional and psychological impacts on Veterans and their families. The complexity and evolving nature of these scams necessitate a multi-faceted approach to prevention and response.

### **VBH's Perspective on Enhancing Veteran Protection**

- **Strengthening Education and Awareness**

VBH believes that education and awareness are the cornerstones of effective scam prevention. By amplifying the reach of educational campaigns and resources, such as the VSAFE website and the VA's Fraud Prevention Kit, we can empower Veterans with the knowledge to identify and evade scams. VBH advocates for tailored educational initiatives that address the specific risks faced by Veterans in the Carolinas, leveraging local media, community events, and digital platforms to disseminate information widely.

- **Facilitating Community Engagement and Support**

Community engagement plays a pivotal role in safeguarding Veterans. VBH supports the creation of a robust support network that includes local businesses, educational institutions, and civic organizations committed to Veteran well-being. By fostering a culture of vigilance and support, communities can serve as a first line of defense against scams targeting Veterans. Collaborative efforts with law enforcement, legal experts, and cybersecurity professionals can further enhance community resilience against fraud.

- **Enhancing Reporting and Response Mechanisms**

Prompt and efficient reporting mechanisms are essential for addressing scams and fraud effectively. VBH recommends streamlining the reporting process and ensuring that Veterans have easy access to clear, straightforward avenues for reporting suspected fraud. This includes not only the existing channels

highlighted by the VA but also local resources that can offer immediate assistance. Furthermore, VBH suggests the development of a centralized database to track scams and fraud trends, facilitating better prevention strategies and more rapid responses to emerging threats.

- **Advocating for Policy and Legislative Support**

VBH emphasizes the importance of policy and legislative frameworks in combating scams and fraud against Veterans. Advocacy for stricter penalties for perpetrators, enhanced privacy protections for Veterans, and increased funding for anti-fraud initiatives are crucial steps in building a more secure environment for our Veterans. Collaboration with policymakers and legislators to draft and enact Veteran-centric policies will be a key focus of VBH's efforts.

The challenge of protecting Veterans from scams and fraud requires concerted action from all stakeholders. Veterans Bridge Home is committed to working alongside the VA, CVEBs, and the broader community to enhance the safety and well-being of Veterans in the Carolinas and beyond. Through education, engagement, advocacy, and collaboration, we can build a more secure future for our Veterans, ensuring they are protected from the predatory practices that seek to undermine their security and trust.

Veterans Bridge Home invites community members, organizations, and institutions to join us in our efforts to protect Veterans from scams and fraud. By sharing resources, reporting suspicious activities, and supporting Veteran-centric policies, we can make a tangible difference in the lives of those who have served our nation. Veterans Bridge Home stands as a beacon of support and advocacy for Veterans in the Carolinas, committed to ensuring their safety, dignity, and well-being in the face of evolving threats.

For more information and to get involved, visit our [website](#), and connect with us on social media. Together, we can create a united front against scams and fraud targeting Veterans.