

# IA VETS CAUCUS NEWS

## Democratic Statewide Candidates

### Governor

- Rob Sand

### Attorney General

- Nate Willems

### Secretary of State

- Ryan Peterman

### State Auditor

- Taylor Wettach

### Secretary of Agriculture

- Chris Jones

### State Treasurer

- John Norwood

### US Senate

- Zach Wahls

- Josh Turek

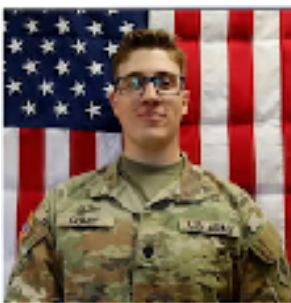


## Iowa Mourns Soldiers Killed in Iranian Attack

Jeffrey O'Brien from Indianola who resided in Waukee, and Declan Coady, a West Des Moines native, became two of the first United States military members killed when Iran launched a drone strike against a tactical operations post in Port of Shuaiba, Kuwait. The attack came after convicted felon Donald Trump began his illegal war against Iran.



Major Jeffrey O'Brien received his commission in 2012 in the Army Reserve, joining as a Signal Corps officer. According to an Army Reserve press release, he was on his second deployment to Kuwait, having served in the region in 2019. He was assigned to the 103rd Sustainment Command unit based in Des Moines.



A sophomore at Drake University, Coady was one of six soldiers killed when Iranian drones struck their tactical operations center at Port Shuaiba in Kuwait. An Army Reservist, he was assigned to the 103rd Sustainment Command based in Des Moines, Iowa.

He, enlisted in 2023 and had reached the Specialist rank when he died. The Army Reserve posthumously promoted him to Sergeant.

## Democratic Congressional Candidates

### First District

- Christina Bohannon
- Travis Terrell

### Second District

- Kathy Dolter
- Lindsay James
- Clint Twedt-Ball

### Third District

- Sarah Trone-Garriott
- Xavier Carrigan

### Fourth District

- Stephanie Steiner
- Ashley WolfTornabane
- Dave Dawson



*Ia Vets Caucus News* is a publication of the Iowa Democratic Veterans Caucus.

Chair - Steve Wilson  
 Vice Chair - Shelly Servadio Elias  
 Provisional - Bob Krause

Major General Todd Erskine, 79th Theater Sustainment Command commander expressed his “deepest sympathy” and respect. “They represent the heart of America” and “we will remember their names, their service, and their sacrifice.”

Six soldiers died in the unmanned aircraft attack. In addition to O’Brien and Coady, Capt. Cody Khork from Florida, Sgt 1st Class Noah Tietjens from Nebraska, Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Amor from Minnesota, and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert M. Marzan from California, all lost their lives in the assault.

Third Congressional District Rep Zach Nunn said on social media nine other soldiers were injured in the attack. They were evacuated to Germany for medical treatment. “Military doctors and medics are working around the clock, and families are receiving updates as more information becomes available.”

Maj. O’Brien and Sgt. Coady join Carroll County’s Pvt. Merle Hay, three men who now all hold the distinction of being our nation’s first deaths in war. Merle Hay died when Germans attacked the Allied lines in November 1917 during the First World War.



*Iowa’s congressional delegation, along with Kim Reynolds are all smiles at the dignified transfer ceremony on the Dover Air Force Base ramp for the arrival of two Iowa Army Reserve soldiers killed in an Iranian drone strike.*





# Iowa Veterans Caucus Statement Regarding Attack on Iran

The Iowa Democratic Veterans Caucus **VEHEMENTLY** opposes convicted felon Donald Trump’s unnecessary attack on Iran. His order puts our national treasure, the men and women of the United States military, at grave risk when that country poses no immediate national security threat to US interests in the region. Less than three months ago, Middle eastern militants attack an Iowa National Guard unit deployed to Syria, killing two Iowans and injuring three others. Trump’s reckless adventure places Iowa’s greatest assets, its young men and women, in jeopardy without any immediate national security threat.

Iowa’s congressional delegation should **IMMEDIATELY** propose legislation to either sanction or end this conflict, consistent with the requirements of the Constitution.



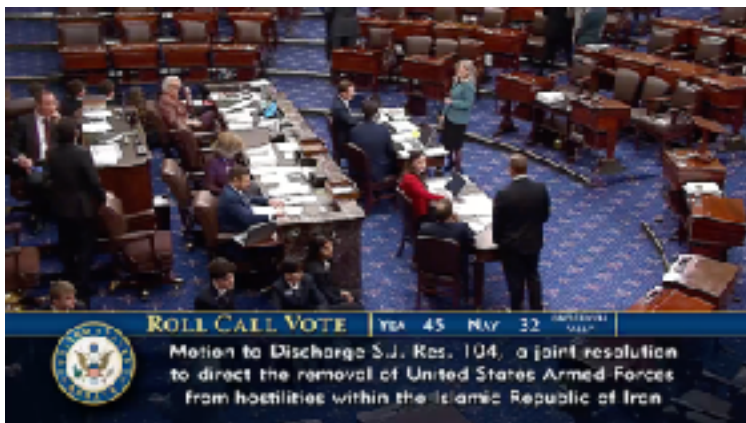
Got a topic you’d like to see in the newsletter? Want the opportunity to communicate with veterans across the United States? Like working with graphics?

Then the Ia Vets Caucus News **WANTS YOU!** Working together makes us stronger and you can help! Steve Wilson at [chair@iavetscaucus.org](mailto:chair@iavetscaucus.org) to volunteer.



## Contact Us

Feel free to send any questions or comments to Steve Wilson at [chair@iavetscaucus.org](mailto:chair@iavetscaucus.org).



*Sen. Joni Ernst laughing as she votes against S.J. Res. 104 requiring removal of US forces from combat with Iraq until after a formal declaration of war. Meanwhile, the Coady and O’Brien families await word from the Army on when they will return the body of their loved ones for burial. O’Brien and Coady were two of six soldiers killed in an Iranian drone strike in the opening days of Trumps illegal war.*



# Democrats Field Large 2026 Candidate Slate



In total, Democrats fielded candidates in eighty-four percent of the federal, statewide, and General Assembly races for the 2026 election cycle.

Republican incumbents face Democratic challengers in all five federal races and the six statewide offices. Of the twenty-five seats up in the Iowa Senate, Democrats will contest twenty and across the rotunda in the House, Democrats will compete in eighty-four races.

The Iowa Democratic Party continues to experience difficulties recruiting candidates from northwestern Iowa. They could not find a person willing to run for Senate District seven, covering rural Plymouth, Woodbury, and Monona counties, and District nine that includes rural areas north of Spirit Lake. The party suffered the same lack of House candidates for that region also.



Republican candidate recruitment in the Iowa House suffered more than Democrats, however. The GOP is surrendering twenty-five seats to the Democrats which gives Democrats a nine seat advantage going into November. That head start means Democrats only need to support provide support for seventy-five races instead of an entire field.



## Sand Opens Cedar Rapids Campaign Office



Gubernatorial candidate Rob Sand greeted nearly one-hundred supporters at his new campaign office in Cedar Rapids. Located in the Town & Country Shopping Center at 3621 1st Avenue SE, this office is Sand's second campaign location in the state, with the first storefront established last January in Des Moines. Office will be open Monday through Friday from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM initially with more hours later in the election cycle.

Sand hit on campaign themes emphasizing affordability and financial accountability along with an anti-establishment populist tone that called on all Iowans to work together to improve Iowans quality of life.



# The Conflict With Iran Began Long Before 1979



Trump apologists justify their support for convicted felon Donald Trump's unconstitutional war against Iran by reaching back to the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis. On November 4, 1979, Iranian students overwhelmed US Embassy security seizing and holding hostage for 444 days, fifty-two Americans. They do not, however, explain Iranians' motivation to overthrow the Shah. Understanding the 1979 Iranian Revolution requires understanding the events leading up to the creation of a Shiite theocracy.

America's relationship with Iran began in the late 1940s. A confluence of factors contributed to America's interest. Recognition of oil's importance economically and militarily, prominence of the United States as a world power after the Second World War's end, and reemergence of anti-Communism motivated President Truman to host the Shah in November and December 1949. Americans hoped to influence the Shah to take actions that would reduce the abject poverty of Iranians and thereby make the populace less susceptible to communist ideology.

They were right to be concerned. After a British geologist discovered oil at Masjed-e Suleiman in 1908, the British effectively controlled Iran, politically and economically, through the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Three-hundred years of imperialism and victimization of native peoples allowed the British to rule the seas, making it a world power. But the sun began setting on the British Empire as the importance of seapower declined. Englishmen, however, failed to adjust their attitudes to changing world realities. Between 1909 and 1951, they stole hundreds of millions of dollars through accounting tricks to prevent paying Iran for the oil it produced.



Iranian workers at the Abadan refinery lived in squalor while British managers occupied estates. Combined with a growing awareness of accounting tricks used by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to avoid paying Iran's government what the company owed for oil it extracted and sold, Iranians began agitating for change. Leading the charge for change was the popular nationalist Mohammad Mossadegh.

Mossadegh first rose to prominence at about the same time geologists discovered oil by opposing the Qajar dynasty and championing democracy. Government threats against him eventually drove Mossadegh from the public scene until 1949 when he returns to elected office.

*Mohammad Mosadegh*

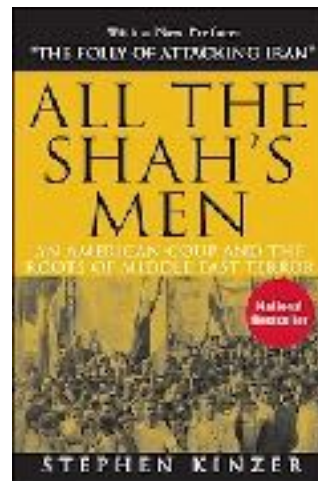
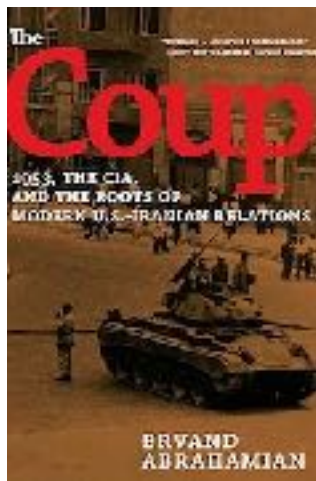
Sclerotic British leaders refused to take action leading to Mossadeh being named Iranian prime minister. Mossadeh accepted the appointment under one condition, that Iran nationalize the oil company. The elected representatives overwhelmingly agreed to that condition which set off a two year crisis between Iran and England.

Fearing the Soviet Union might attempt to take advantage of the situation, America attempted to mediate a settlement. They failed. Moreover, as Stephen Kinzer makes clear in his book, All The Shah's Men, by 1951, Iranians were no longer amenable to any settlement that left the British with any control of the oil company and Western attitudes led Iranians to vehemently oppose any foreign interventions.

Britain played on the fears of communism's spread in the United States to lure America into fomenting a coup against Iran's elected leaders. In August 1953, the CIA and Britain's MI6 worked together to instigate a coup which deposed Mossadeh, replacing the popular leader with the Shah leading to twenty-five years of repression of Iranian people and metastasized a hatred of western governments that manifested itself in the 1979 Iranian Revolution.



Ervand Abrahamian, a history professor at City University of New York, and Stephen Kinzer, award-winning foreign correspondent who served at the *New York Times* bureau chief in Istanbul, Berlin, and Managua, both offer in-depth treatments of the 1953 coup which provide the reader with insights into Iranian anger with the United States leading to 1979.



# Bills In the General Assembly



**SF7** - Allows any disabled veteran, regardless of residency status, to obtain a lifetime fishing license in Iowa.

**SF227** - Prevents deployment of Iowa National Guard units away from the state absent a declaration of war.

**SF361** - Establish an armed forces reserve scholarship program.

**SF2272** - Requires production of a poster for workplaces to display that includes information on resources for substance abuse and mental health, education resources, tax benefits, vehicle and drivers license information, unemployment benefits eligibility, and legal services.

**SF2124** - Adds two additional criteria for disabled veteran homestead credit availability.

**SF2186** - Deploying parent unable to exercise court-ordered visitation with their child can make that time up either in advance of the deployment or in the thirty days after their return.

**SF2466** - Replaces the county commissions of veteran's affairs fund and training program account with the county veterans services excellence fund and training program and administration account. It also strikes a specific funding allocation each fiscal year instead saying each county shall receive an equal amount and subsequently allocations will be based on performance criteria established by the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs. The bill requires the veterans services excellence training program and administration account to fund training and support for county commissions of Veterans Affairs. It also Requires I DVA to create a statewide standardized electronic claim system through which county veterans service offices must submit all United States Department of Veterans Affairs claims.

**SSB1049** - Makes changes to the National Guard scholarship program

**SSB3302** - Repeals Code section 37A.1, which makes the sale, trade, or transfer of veterans commemorative property on a person's property a simple misdemeanor if done without the Department of Veterans Affairs' authorization.

**HF931** - Removes the requirement that a veterans organization operating a card tournament allow every participant the same chance of winning.

**HF2214** - Provides free camping at state parks.

**HF2433** - Prohibits persons other than an accredited representatives from receiving compensation for assisting a veteran, service member, or dependent of a veteran with a claim.

**HF2491** - Requires regents institutions to provide free education to one-hundred percent disabled veterans.



## VMFC Upcoming April Election

The Veterans and Military Families Council of the Democratic National Committee is a vet's voice to the national Democrats. They are inviting you to their General meeting at the DNC's quarterly meeting in New Orleans in April where the group will be conducting an election to fill the position of Co-Chair.

The Mission of the VMFC is to build and coordinate a national network of veterans and military families that will assist in electing Democrats in national, state, and local elections, promote the accomplishments and agenda of the [Democratic] President's Administration and other Democratic Party elected officials, and to enhance and coordinate programs and activities of other elements of the Democratic Party of the United States.

If you have a desire to run for this position on the Executive Board please see the below rules:

- Per DNC gender rules the leadership shall consist of two persons who identify as different genders. Only persons who identify as Male or Non Binary and are a Veteran may apply for candidacy for this position.
- The election will be in person in April 2026 at the VMFC Meeting in New Orleans.
- You do not need to attend the meeting in order to run.
- Nominations will be taken from the floor.
- You must attend the meeting to vote, proxy voting is not permitted.

If you have any questions or concerns about the election please contact Vice Chair of Membership Frederick Nickens at [membership@dncvmfc.org](mailto:membership@dncvmfc.org).



# April DNC Meeting Schedule

## Wednesday, April 8

- 1500 - 1900 - DNC Registration
- 1700 - 1900 - Chair Martin's Welcome Reception

## Thursday, April 9

- 0730 - 1800 - DNC Registration
- 0900 - 1100 - Resolutions Committee
- 1130 - 1430 - Credentials Committee
- 1230 - 1400 - Veterans and Military Families Council
- 1500 - 1900 - Rules and Bylaws Committee

## Friday, April 10

- 0730 - 1830 - DNC Registration
- 0900 - 1100 - Budget Oversight
- 1530 - 1830 - General Session

## Saturday, April 11

- 0730 - 1830 - DNC Registration
- 0900 - 1200 - DNC Training
- 1100 - 1300 - Executive Committee
- 1330 - 1630 - Regional Caucuses



## Significant Dates

- April 8 - 11** - Democratic National Committee Quarterly Meeting in New Orleans.
- April 15** - Iowa Vets Caucus via Zoom.
- April 21** - Eastern Iowa Honor Flight out of Cedar Rapids.
- May 5** - Midwest Honor Flight out of Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- May 11** - Dubuque and Tri-States Honor Flight out of Dubuque.
- May 12** - Eastern Iowa Honor Flight out of Cedar Rapids.  
- Dubuque and Tri-States Honor Flight out of Dubuque
- May 13** - In-office absentee voting can begin.
- May 18** - Last day to register to vote.
- May 19** - Midwest Honor Flight out of Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- May 20** - Iowa Vets Caucus via Zoom.
- June 1** - In-office absentee voting ends.
- June 2** - Iowa Primary  
- Midwest Honor Flight out of Sioux Falls, South Dakota

# What You Can Do...

Convicted felon Donald Trump has no plan for ending his unconstitutional war in Iran. Please send a letter or a postcard to our elected representatives below demanding they find out when our military members will return home.

Sen/Rep. <name>

Please demand that the White House provide the objective of this war with Iran and a timeline for the conflict's end.

Respectfully,

Senator Chuck Grassley  
135 Hart Senate Office Bldg  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Joni Ernst  
260 Russell Senate Office Bldg  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**First Congressional District**

Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks  
504 Cannon House Office Bldg  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Second Congressional District**

Rep. Ashley Hinson  
2458 Rayburn House Office Bldg  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Third Congressional District**

Rep. Zach Nunn  
1410 Longworth House Bldg  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Fourth Congressional District**

Rep Randy Feenstra  
2434 Rayburn House Bldg  
Washington, D.C. 20515



# Contested Primary Candidate Websites

## US Senate

- Wahls For Us - zachwahls.com
- Turek For Iowa - turek4iowa.com

## First Congressional District

- Bohannon For Congress - bohannonforcongress.com
- Terrell For Congress - terrellforcongress.com

## Second Congressional District

- Dolter For Congress - dolterforcongress.org
- Lindsay James For Congress - www.lindsayforiowa.com
- Clint For Congress - clintforiowa.com

## Third Congressional District

- Sarah For Iowa Congress - sarahforiowa.com
- Xavier Carrigan For Iowa's 3rd - www.xcarrigan.com

## Fourth Congressional District

- Stephanie Steiner For Congress - votestephaniesteinerforiowadistrict4.org
- Ashley WolfTornabane For Congress - www.wolftornabaneforiowa.com
- Dave Dawson For US House - davedawsonforiowa.com



What Trump  
Supporters  
voted For

What Trump  
Gave Them

