



Justice for Warriors Newsletter

December 2025

Dear Friend,

As 2025 draws to a close, we are filled with deep appreciation for everyone who helped us advance our mission this year. We have been able to defend the rights of veterans who have been wrongfully denied the benefits they earned due to disabilities resulting from their military service. We are delighted to share with you a few of our recent activities and successes. We are gratified with our Supreme Court victory, but our work for veterans does not end there.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our veterans and their families.

Wishing you and yours Happy Holidays and a wonderful New Year!

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Paul Wright'.

Paul Wright
Executive Director

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

NVLSP has been relentless in assisting our nation's service members, veterans, and their families in obtaining the disability benefits they were unfairly denied. Below are some of 2025's highlights:

\$50M

Since 2020, NVLSP has secured over \$50 million wrongly denied benefits payments for veterans it represented before the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

1,000

Filed over 1,000 appeals in 2025 before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. NVLSP averaged a win-rate of over 97% at the Court.

600

Placed approximately 600 cases and over 1,700 file reviews with Lawyers Serving Warriors® volunteer attorneys across the country.

8,100

Over 8,100 attorneys, veterans service officers, and other advocates were trained by NVLSP's Training and Publications staff in 2025.

\$7.2B

NVLSP ensured that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) paid more than \$7.2 billion in retroactive benefits to hundreds of thousands of disabled Vietnam veterans and their survivors since VA signed the Nehmer Consent Decree in 1991.

NVLSP'S 17th ANNUAL BENEFIT

On November 20, 2025, NVLSP hosted its Seventeenth Annual Benefit Reception —*Keeping The Promise: A Legacy of Advocacy*. With great appreciation for all of our sponsors, partners, and attendees. Your support and participation made it a wonderful evening as we honored the commitment of our nation's veterans and showcased the impact of our collaborative efforts.



Pictured from Left to Right NVLSP Leadership and Staff: Bart Stichman (Co-Founder, Special Counsel), Rochelle Bobroff (Director of Lawyers Serving Warriors ®Pro Bono Program), Stacy Tromble (Director of CAVC Litigation), Christine Cote Hill (Special Counsel), Paul Wright (Executive Director), Louis George (Special Counsel), Ana Reyes (Director of Development) and Rick Spataro (Director of Training and Publications).

Thank you to all those who participated in the event, including our Emcee Yamiche Alcindor, NBC News White House Correspondent, and the honorees: T-Mobile, recipient of the Corporate Leadership Award; Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, recipient of the Pro Bono Partner of the Year Award; Jordan Passmore, Associate at Clifford Chance, recipient of the Lawyers Serving Warriors® Excellence Award; Howard Shapiro, Partner at WilmerHale, recipient of the Senator Daniel K. Inouye Award; and Stephen Kinnaird, Retired Partner of Paul Hastings, recipient of the NVLSP Lifetime Achievement Award.

Watch the event video [here](#) and check out the highlights of NVLSP's work over more than 44 years [here](#).

LITIGATION UPDATE

Case 1:25-cv-02442-RMM Document 1 Filed 11/13/25 Page 1 of 13
Receipt number 0100171-0017002

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS

JANE DOE, on behalf of herself and all others similarly situated,	Plaintiff,	Case No. 25-1942 C
v.		CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	Defendant.	

NVLSP, Sidley Austin, and Hogan Lovells File Class Action Lawsuit Supporting Veterans' Rights to Receive Retroactive Combat-Related Special Compensation

Pro Bono Counsel: Sidley Austin LLP and Hogan Lovells LLP

INTRODUCTION

1. Plaintiff Jane Doe served her country with distinction in the United States Air Force from 2005 to 2010. She deployed to Kuwait Regional Air Base in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and for her exemplary service, she received multiple commendations. She was temporarily medically retired in 2010 and permanently retired the following year.

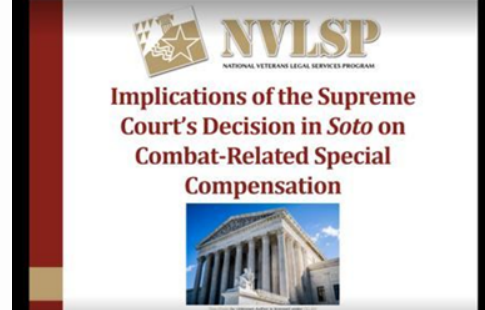
2. To honor and compensate veterans like Mr. Doe, Congress enacted the Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) statute. See Pub. L. No. 107-314, § 436, 118 Stat. 3418, 1974 (2002) (codified at 10 U.S.C. § 1413a). The Department of the Air Force determined that Mr. Doe qualified for CRSC, and awarded her retroactive payments for the time between when the Air Force received her completed application and issued its decision. Her contention with Department of Defense (DOD) guidance, the Air Force has refused to award, and the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) has refused to pay her the full amount to which she is lawfully entitled—compensation for the period between September 2010 (the first full month after she was initially eligible for service-connected disability benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)) and August 2025 (the month after her application was received).

Soto v. United States (U.S. Supreme Court) On June 12, 2025, in a case brought by the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) and Sidley Austin LLP, the U.S. Supreme Court [ruled](#) unanimously that a class of over 9000 disabled veterans had been wrongfully denied their full retroactive Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). The case challenged the

Department of Defense's (DOD) policy limiting the effective date of CRSC to 6 years prior to the date of application. The Supreme Court unanimously held that the "statutory scheme" for CRSC reflected congressional intent "to forgo a limitations period." On August 20, 2025, DOD [issued](#) Guidance mandating implementation of that decision for veterans whose retroactive CRSC benefits had been limited to 6 years.

However, the August 20, 2025 Guidance instituted a completely new effective date for decisions issued as of that date. The Guidance cut off all retroactive CRSC benefits to the month after the application was filed. On November 13, 2025, NVLSP, Sidley and Hogan Lovells [filed](#) a class action complaint in the United States Court of Federal Claims, on behalf of Jane Doe, and a class of current and future veterans who have been, or will be, wrongfully denied retroactive CRSC benefits due to the Guidance. The named plaintiff was denied approximately 15 years of retroactive CRSC benefits. The lawsuit asserts that the new policy is contrary to the text, structure and purpose of the CRSC statute. The lawsuit asks the court to award retroactive CRSC benefits to the named plaintiff and class members.

Additionally, NVLSP updated FAQs and hosted a webinar to assist veterans in understanding the *Soto* decision and its implications. You can find all the *Soto* resources here: <https://nvlsp.org/what-we-do/class-actions/>



NVLSP ON THE MOVE



On December 10, 2025, NVLSP Co-Founder and Special Counsel Bart Stichman testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs regarding pending legislation. You can read his testimony [here](#).

NVLSP Equal Justice Fellow, Sean Wojciechowski (L), and Matthew Handley (R), Staff Attorney, attended the SOCOM Warrior Care Program Expo in Charlotte, NC on December 3, 2025 to share their insights with veterans and service members at the event.



On November 20, 2025, NVLSP Special Counsel, Louis George, met with our partner Navy Mutual Aid Association.

Pictured from left to right: Meredith Burns, Veterans Services Program Manager and Senior VSO Representative, Michelle Ramos Domingue, Esq., General Counsel, NVLSP Special Counsel Louis George, Brian Luther, Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.), Navy Mutual President and CEO, and John Terence

Blake, Vice Admiral, USN (Ret.), Navy Mutual Board Chair.

On November 6, 2025 NVLSP Executive Director, Paul Wright, served as keynote speaker at pro bono partner Alston & Bird Sen. Bob Dole Veterans Award Ceremony.

Pictured from left to right: Edward T. Kang, Partner Alston & Bird's D.C. office, NVLSP Senior Pro Bono Coordinating Attorney Erin Mee, NVLSP Executive Director Paul Wright, Pete November, Bob Dole Awardee and CEO of Oschner Health, Mary Benton, Pro Bono

Partner, Atlanta Office Alston & Bird, Alexis Higgs, Bob Dole Awardee and Counsel Alston & Bird, Los Angeles, and Bill Jordan, Partner, Alston & Bird, Atlanta and Washington D.C.



NVLSP Director of Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) Litigation and President of the CAVC Historical Society, Stacy Tromble, took part in the Society's Annual Meeting in October.

NVLSP Director of CAVC Litigation and President of CAVC Historical Society, Stacy Tromble, presenting the Society's Outstanding Service Award to Robin Cole.

On Oct. 16, 2025 NVLSP Director of Litigation, Renee Burbank, participated in a congressional roundtable discussion examining the issues related to justice-involved veterans and Veterans Treatment Courts.



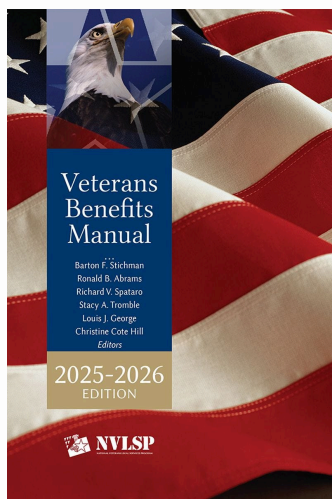
On September 29, 2025 NVLSP attended the 2025 Tennessee Department of Veterans Services Annual Training, "Service Beyond Duty."

Pictured left to right: NVLSP Executive Director Paul Wright, MG Tommy H. Baker (Ret.), Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services, NVLSP Director of Training and Publications Rick Spataro, NVLSP Special Counsel Louis George.

NVLSP IN THE NEWS

- On December 11, 2025 Bloomberg Law recognized the work of our pro bono partner Sidley Austin LLP with NVLSP in the recent Supreme Court victory in *Soto v. U.S.* [Bloomberg Law](#)
- On October 11, 2025 Health Reporter Owen Racer interviewed NVLSP Staff Attorney Ryan Kelley regarding the challenges of getting the case of Afghanistan veteran Cpl. Sean Libby, who is suffering from chronic

kidney disease linked to his burn pit exposure, approved by the VA. Mr. Libby is currently seeking a kidney donor. [Cascadia Daily News](#)



NVLSP Announces Release of Its 2025-2026 of *Veterans Benefits Manual*

On December 16, 2025, NVLSP released [the 2025-2026 edition of its renowned *Veterans Benefits Manual*](#). This new edition has been painstakingly updated to reflect critical changes in veterans law and includes new advocacy strategies to better assist veterans and their representatives.

WEBINAR SALE

Happy Holidays!

NVLSP would like to thank you for helping our nation's veterans.

For a limited time, we are offering 50% off the price of all of our recorded webinars!

To receive this discount, use the following coupon code when checking out: **NVLSPHOLIDAY**

Coupon code expires: January 11, 2026



Recorded Webinar Topics include the following and many more:

- Identifying and Overcoming Common VA Errors
- Maximizing VA Benefits
- Total Disability Ratings Based on Individual Unemployability
- Revisions of VA Decisions Based on Clear and Unmistakable Error
- Rating Reductions and Severance of Service Connection

Webinars are available for 72 hours after purchase

Our next webinar series will be in January 2026:

- Jan. 21-23, 2026: Recent Court Decisions Veterans Advocates Need to Know About (May 2025-December 2025)

WAYS TO CONNECT

We hope this newsletter inspires you to become more active with NVLSP. If you want to help NVLSP do more for our veterans, here are a few suggestions.

1. You can follow us on [X](#), connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), and like us on [Facebook](#).
2. Help us promote our free [App](#) for veterans.
3. Tell a friend about [NVLSP](#).



We look forward to connecting with you again soon!



nvlsp.org

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