



# TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

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## Press Release



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### **New Campaign “Keeps the Wheels Turning” by Increasing Direct Support to Texas Veterans**

**TEXAS** – The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) is asking Texans to “Keep the Wheels Turning for Texas Veterans” and their families by making a donation through the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) vehicle registration form. All donations go to the TVC Fund for Veterans’ Assistance (FVA) program which provides grants to Veteran service organizations and non-profit charitable institutions that assist Veterans and their families at the community level throughout Texas.

“Overall, the FVA grants have had a major impact on the health and wellbeing of Texas Veterans and their families, but currently, the FVA only has enough money to fund 1/10 of the overwhelming need among organizations helping Texas Veterans,” said Kathy I. Wood, Director of the FVA. “By promoting awareness about the donation line on vehicle registration forms, we want Texans to take advantage of this easy way to support Veterans and their families at the community level.”

The “Keep the Wheels Turning for Texas Veterans” campaign is intended to increase awareness about the opportunity to make a tax-deductible donation to help Veterans while registering a vehicle at local Tax Assessor Collectors offices or online at [txdmv.gov](http://txdmv.gov). As Texans begin celebrating the Fourth of July, this donation opportunity is an easy way to show support for Veterans in Texas and make a big difference in their lives.

With these donations, organizations like Big Brothers, Big Sisters Lone Star can continue to mentor the children of military personnel and Veterans living in North Texas; Samaritan Center for Counseling & Pastoral Care can continue to provide post-traumatic stress and family counseling to Veterans and family members across Central Texas; and

the Young Women's Christian Association El Paso Del Norte Region provides financial assistance and money management services to Veterans and their families in West Texas.

Since its inception in 2009, the FVA has provided over \$29.9 million through 145 grants to 100 local government and non-profit organizations. With these funds, FVA grantees have served over 135,000 Texas Veterans and family members through services that include counseling for Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS), housing assistance for homeless Veterans, short-term financial assistance, legal assistance, and family and child services.

The option to donate on the vehicle registration form was created during the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature and moved to the front of the form during the 82nd Texas Legislature. Senate Bill 1635, spearheaded by State Sen. Wendy Davis and State Rep. Joe Farias, ultimately created an option box on front of the TxDMV's vehicle registration form where Texans could contribute directly to the FVA.

Currently, the Texas Veterans Commission FVA program also receives funding from the proceeds of the \$2 scratch-off lottery game, *Veterans Cash*, and the newest game is in stores July 8. Since its introduction in November 2009, sales of the lottery game have provided over \$25 million to the FVA. Individuals can also support the FVA by making online donation through [www.tvc.texas.gov](http://www.tvc.texas.gov). Donations to the FVA are tax deductible under the provisions of Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The statewide "Keep the Wheels Turning" campaign began May 18<sup>th</sup> with the help of local TxDMV and county tax assessor offices. Texans registering their vehicles are encouraged to donate to support Texas Veterans and their families through the FVA. The campaign will conclude in October 2013.

#### Texas Veterans Commission

The mission of the Texas Veterans Commission is to advocate for and provide superior service to Veterans and their families in the areas of disability claims assistance, employment services, education benefits and grant funding. Over 200 skilled counselors in 75 cities provide one-on-one guidance to Veterans and their families to ensure they receive all of the benefits to which they are entitled. For more information, go to [www.tvc.texas.gov](http://www.tvc.texas.gov).

For more information about the Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance campaign, please <http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Vehicle-Registration.aspx>.

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