

National Insights Story

Advocating for Arizona Veterans on Capitol Hill

Representative: Brad Shafer

National Assignment: Department of Arizona Delegate

Washington Conference: March 2–4, 2026

Editor's Note: This story is based on the representative's submitted report and has been edited for clarity, organization, and factual completeness while preserving the author's voice and observations.

Why Arizona Was There

Arizona's delegation attended the Washington Conference to participate in National meetings, hear directly from American Legion leadership, and carry Arizona veterans' priorities to Congress through face-to-face meetings with members of Arizona's Congressional delegation.

From the Representative

I had the privilege of standing alongside fellow Arizona Legionnaires as we brought the voices of our veterans to Capitol Hill. Throughout the week we heard from our National Commander, VA Secretary Doug Collins, and legislative leaders while meeting with nearly the entire Arizona Congressional delegation or their staffs. Our conversations centered on issues that matter most to Arizona veterans—including women veterans' health, mental health resources, Guard and Reserve GI Bill parity, community care, telehealth, and the Major Richard Star Act. One thing became very clear: when the Legion Family speaks with one voice, people listen.

Conference Snapshot

- Met with Senators Kelly and Gallego and Representatives Schweikert, Crane, Stanton, Biggs, Ciscomani, Hamadeh, Gosar, Ansari and Grijalva or their staffs.
- Participated in Washington Conference activities and National briefings.
- Observed advocacy focused on 2026 American Legion legislative priorities.
- Returned with information to share with Arizona Posts and members.

Looking Ahead

I left Washington convinced that Arizona's investment in National participation pays dividends. Every meeting strengthens relationships, every conversation advances veterans' issues, and every representative returns better prepared to serve our members.