



Boozman Bulletin: SAVE LIVES Act Signed into Law

We've cleared the last hurdle to help more veterans access the COVID-19 vaccine thanks to the *Strengthening and Amplifying Vaccination Efforts to Locally Immunize all Veterans and Every Spouse (SAVE LIVES) Act* that was [signed into law today](#).

This is a great legislative victory for the veteran community. We've seen how the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is establishing a high standard for distributing and administering the COVID-19 vaccine to veterans in rural and underserved areas. The *SAVE LIVES Act* will allow the VA to expand the great work it's doing to get shots in the arms of more veterans, their loved ones and caregivers.

This legislation is a good example of how Arkansans play a role in shaping federal policies. I appreciate the input from Natural State veterans who shared their experience with the VA's COVID-19 vaccination effort and provided insights about how it could be improved and made even more effective. Their feedback helped pave the way for expanded eligibility for spouses and caregivers through the VA.

We were able to get this quickly across the finish line because this legislation had bipartisan support. By working together, we can make impactful and meaningful change that supports the immediate need to speed up the vaccination process so we can save more lives and get us all on a path to normalcy even sooner.



What They're Saying about the SAVE LIVES Act

"U.S. Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark., who serves on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, had championed the measure after hearing from Arkansans that restrictions were complicating vaccination efforts." ([Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, 3/21/21](#))

"This bill is all about getting shots in the arms of more in the veteran community and allowing the VA to expand the great work it's already doing to administer shots," said Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark., who introduced the bill. "This is great news for veterans, their spouses and caregivers, and puts us one step closer to normalcy." The *Save Lives Act* will allow the VA to vaccinate all veterans, regardless of whether they're eligible for VA health care." ([Stars and Stripes, 3/19/21](#))

"Veterans Affairs leaders had supported the move, saying they did not want to turn away any veteran from receiving the shots if they were available. But under current rules, department medical centers were permitted to administer vaccines only to veterans already eligible for VA health care services, and for certain caregivers registered in VA support programs. That totals just under 7 million individuals. Under the new bill, that number is expected to jump to more than 20 million. It would make vaccines eligible 'to all veterans, veteran spouses, caregivers, and Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) recipients to the extent that such vaccines are available.'" ([Military Times, 3/19/21](#))

Securing the Border

The Biden administration's policies have created a crisis on our southern border. One issue that has led to the current emergency is the president's [suspension of border wall funding](#) and construction. Congress previously appropriated federal dollars for border wall infrastructure, but President Biden illegally halted over \$1 billion of this funding. Our border patrol agents are working around the clock to handle this crisis and are overwhelmed. The president must take immediate action to secure our border by enhancing border security, enforcing our immigration laws and re-implementing the prior policies that proved effective in deterring or managing

attempts to migrate to our country.

Supporting Law Enforcement

I am proud to support the [Protect and Serve Act](#), legislation I helped reintroduce last week. It sends a clear message that we stand with our police and will hold those who perpetrate attacks against them accountable. This legislation would create federal penalties for individuals who knowingly cause, or attempt to cause, serious bodily injury to local, state or federal law enforcement officers. Under this bill, individuals who kill a law enforcement officer could receive a life sentence.

Recognizing Arkansas Veterans



The ‘Salute to Veterans’ series honors the service and sacrifice of Arkansas veterans who served our nation in uniform. In recognition of Women’s History Month, our latest feature highlights the service of [Gulf War veteran Master Sergeant \(retired\) Sue Newton](#). Her distinguished 34-year career in the Arkansas National Guard is a testament to the great work of our country’s sisters-in-arms. Her memories of her time in uniform are an important part of our history that will be submitted to the [Veterans History Project](#).

Preparing to Travel Abroad

Passport services continue to be delayed, so be sure to plan ahead to ensure your passport is current if you’re planning an upcoming trip abroad.

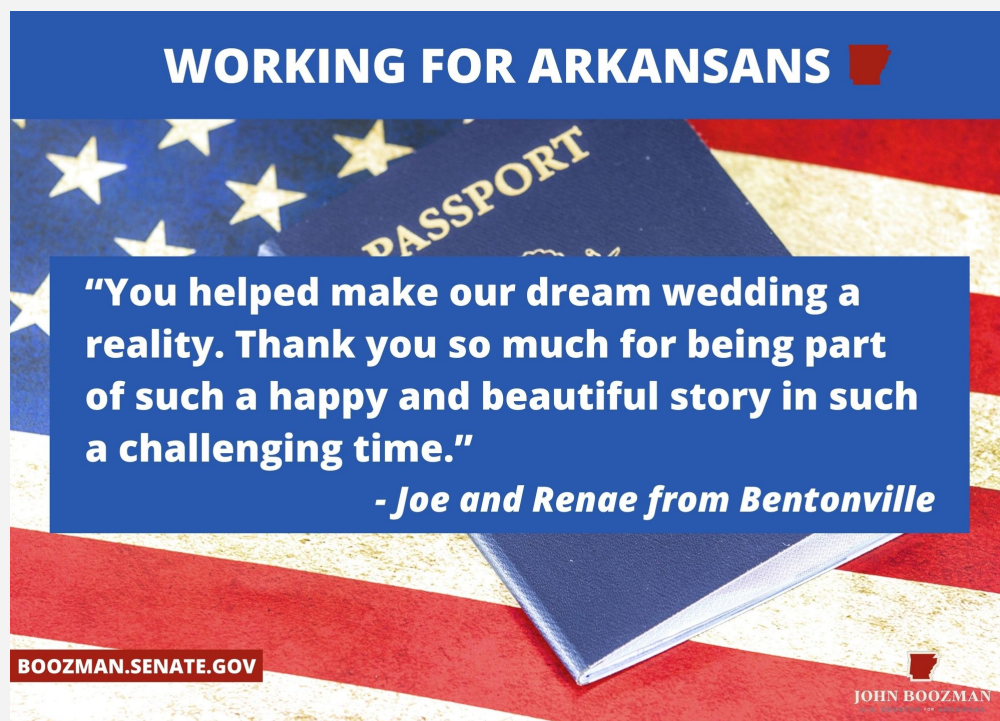
Travelers also need to be aware of COVID-19 testing requirements. In addition to providing the necessary documents to the country you plan to visit, as of January 28, 2021, all people entering

the U.S. must have a negative COVID-19 test within three days of travel or proof of recovery from COVID-19 within 90 days. This includes U.S. citizens and legal residents who are returning home after traveling outside the country. The U.S. Department of State has [full details](#) on COVID-19 testing for reentry.

If you have trouble with this process or need assistance with a passport, feel free to [reach out to my office](#).

Constituent Corner

My staff and I remain committed to doing all we can to help during these challenging times. While some federal agencies are struggling to meet the changing demands of their services during the pandemic, we continue to get answers for Arkansans.



It was a pleasure to assist these newlyweds. They applied to renew a passport in February 2020 for their wedding in July 2020. When COVID-19 halted most passport processing, they weren't sure if they would be able to have their wedding. My staff and I were honored to work with the National Passport Center on their behalf and play a role in their special day. [Let us help you](#).

Connecting on Social Media

Stay up to date with what I'm doing for Arkansans via social media. You can find me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



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