

# **AVVA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

June 2016

Sharon Hodge

As newly elected chair of the Government Affairs committee, working with Joanna we have redesigned the AVVA Government Affairs webpage. The new information on the website will enable AVVA members to obtain more knowledge of the legislative process, and better understand AVVA legislative and policy issues.

## **What the committee has been doing:**

Finalized AVVA legislative 2016 agenda and posted on the website.

Conducted advocacy 101 class for AVVA members at the April 2016 board meeting

On behalf of the AVVA National President, letters of support were faxed to members of the House and Senate supporting passage of H.R. 1769 and S.901 the Toxic Exposure Research Act. Letters of supports were also faxed to the Ranking Member and Minority Member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee in support of S.2921, the Veterans First Act. The bill language include extending caregivers benefits to Vietnam Veterans and Toxic Exposure Research Act each are supported in AVVA 2016 legislative priorities.

The committee posted legislative update on the AVVA GA website-requesting members to Take Action contacting their Senators supporting passage of S.2921, the Veterans First Act using VVA Capwiz electronic advocacy site.

The fifth call in Day on the Hill was June 22, sent via VVA Capwiz electronic media to AVVA membership.

On Memorial Day 2016 following the Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, accompanied by Kate O'Hare Palmer, VVA Women Veterans

Chair participated in the Ceremonial wreath ceremony where we laid the AVVA Wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

In addition, I represented VVA and AVVA at our two day Education and Information Tent in Thunder Alley, Washington DC on the National Mall during the Memorial Day weekend. Thousands of Motorcycle riders descended on the mall from all of the country attending Rolling Thunder annual ride/parade showing their support for our POW/MIAs.