
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 400 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY BELFANTI, PHILLIPS, GOODMAN, READSHAW, ARGALL,
BENNINGHOFF, BIANCUCCI, BISHOP, BOBACK, BUXTON, CALTAGIRONE,
CAPPELLI, CASORIO, CLYMER, COHEN, DALLY, DENLINGER,
DePASQUALE, DONATUCCI, EVERETT, FAIRCHILD, FRANKEL, FREEMAN,
GEORGE, GIBBONS, GINGRICH, HARKINS, HELM, HENNESSEY, HERSHEY,
HESS, HICKERNELL, HORNAMAN, JOSEPHS, KOTIK, KULA, LEACH,
MAHONEY, MAJOR, MANN, MANTZ, MARKOSEK, McCALL, MELIO,
MICOZZIE, MILLARD, MOUL, MOYER, MURT, NAILOR, O'NEILL,
PALLONE, PETRARCA, PETRONE, PRESTON, RAMALEY, RAPP, REICHLEY,
SAINATO, SAMUELSON, SANTONI, SAYLOR, SCAVELLO, SHAPIRO,
SIPTROTH, SOLOBAY, STERN, SURRA, VULAKOVICH, WATSON,
WOJNAROSKI, YUDICHAK, WALKO AND MUNDY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
SEPTEMBER 11, 2007

A RESOLUTION

1 Memorializing the Congress of the United States to address the
2 need for improvement and an increase of programs for veterans
3 health care under the Department of Veterans Affairs.

4 WHEREAS, Military veterans who have served their country
5 honorably and who were promised and have earned health care and
6 benefits from the Federal Government through the Department of
7 Veterans Affairs are now in need of these benefits; and

8 WHEREAS, As increasing numbers of veterans are returning from
9 tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, national surveys report
10 that approximately 1,800,000 veterans under 65 years of age
11 already do not have access to basic health insurance or the care
12 at Veterans Affairs hospitals; and

13 WHEREAS, The funding of the health care programs of the

1 Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans
2 Affairs has failed to reflect the admission of newly eligible
3 veterans in the wake of the Veterans' Health Care Eligibility
4 Reform Act of 1996 and has fallen short of the amount needed to
5 counter soaring medical care inflation, resulting in a funding
6 shortfall of at least \$10 billion; and

7 WHEREAS, The current discretionary method of funding the
8 health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration is
9 uncertain and is subject annually to the whim and competing
10 priorities of the Congress, to the detriment of the veterans
11 being served; and

12 WHEREAS, Vietnam Veterans of America supports the adoption of
13 a new funding mechanism for the health care programs of the
14 Veterans Health Administration that is indexed to medical
15 inflation and the per capita use of the administration's health
16 care system; and

17 WHEREAS, Substantial delay in adjudicating veterans' claims
18 for service-connected disability compensation, a cause of much
19 anguish and anger among veterans, results from the insufficient
20 number of adjudicators and inadequate training and supervision
21 of adjudicators associated with the underfunded Veterans
22 Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, While the vast majority of the Department of
25 Veterans Affairs employees are dedicated to serving veterans, it
26 is necessary to ensure that employee accountability standards be
27 strengthened at all levels; and

28 WHEREAS, While more than 5 million veterans use the Veterans
29 Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs for
30 their health care needs, tens of thousands more are eligible for

1 benefits about which they are unaware due to inadequate outreach
2 efforts by the department; therefore be it

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
4 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorialize the Congress to address
5 problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs related to the
6 provision of health care and benefits, the adjudication of
7 claims, accountability and outreach and to enact legislation
8 creating an appropriation formula that ensures predictable and
9 adequate funding of the health care programs of the Veterans
10 Health Administration; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
12 the President of the United States, to the Secretary of Veterans
13 Affairs, to the presiding officers of each house of Congress and
14 to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.