

By: Escobar

H.R. No. 2182

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Texas is home to approximately 1.75 million
2 veterans, and their honorable service to our nation merits the
3 respect of the entire state; thousands of these brave Texans now
4 reside in the Rio Grande Valley, but despite having fulfilled their
5 duty, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is not
6 providing adequate health care to the veterans of South Texas; and

7 WHEREAS, Recently the nation has witnessed with dismay the
8 treatment of veterans who were subject to appalling conditions at
9 the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and this incident revealed a
10 troubling dimension to the health care system for American
11 veterans, not only at Walter Reed, but throughout the United
12 States; and

13 WHEREAS, The lack of sufficient care is especially severe in
14 South Texas; the Veterans Health Administration operates only two
15 outpatient clinics in the entire Rio Grande Valley and must refer
16 veterans to San Antonio's Audie Murphy Veterans Hospital for acute
17 health care needs; as a result, some disabled and elderly veterans
18 are obliged to travel as much as 250 miles in order to receive the
19 care they need; and

20 WHEREAS, In April 2007, the United States House of
21 Representatives' Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on
22 Health found that access to care for veterans in rural areas was in
23 need of improvement and stressed the need to prepare for future
24 long-term care needs of disabled and aging veterans; and

1 WHEREAS, The exigency of improved health care facilities is
2 particularly pressing considering this increasing need for elderly
3 and disabled veteran health care; according to the committee, the
4 number of veterans in need of long-term care is likely to increase
5 by 120 percent over the next five years; furthermore, the VA
6 anticipates treating an additional 263,000 Operation Iraqi Freedom
7 and Operation Enduring Freedom veterans in 2008, an increase of
8 more than 25 percent over 2007 figures; and

9 WHEREAS, The United States Congress is currently considering
10 H.R. 538, introduced by Texas Congressman Solomon Ortiz; H.R. 538
11 would provide for construction of a new full-service, 50-bed
12 hospital with a 125-bed nursing home in far South Texas, addressing
13 the pressing need for improved veterans health care in the Rio
14 Grande Valley, and it is appropriate that the legislature support
15 this effort; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas
17 Legislature respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to
18 support the construction of a new veterans hospital in the Rio
19 Grande Valley; and, be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
21 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, the
22 speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the
23 senate of the United States Congress, the chair of the House
24 Committee on Veterans Affairs, and all members of the Texas
25 delegation to the congress with the request that this resolution be
26 officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the
27 Congress of the United States of America.