

1-1 By: Van de Putte S.C.R. No. 37
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 8, 2007; March 22, 2007, read
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Veteran Affairs and
1-4 Military Installations; April 10, 2007, reported favorably by the
1-5 following vote: Yeas 3, Nays 0; April 10, 2007, sent to printer.)

1-6 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, Military veterans who have served their country
1-8 honorably and who were promised and have earned health care and
1-9 benefits from the federal government through the Department of
1-10 Veterans Affairs are now in need of these benefits; and

1-11 WHEREAS, Federal discretionary funding is controlled by the
1-12 executive branch and the United States Congress through the budget
1-13 and appropriations process; and

1-14 WHEREAS, Direct funding provides the Department of Veterans
1-15 Affairs with a reliable, predictable, and consistent source of
1-16 funding to provide timely, efficient, and high-quality health care
1-17 for our veterans; and

1-18 WHEREAS, Currently almost 90 percent of federal health care
1-19 spending is direct rather than discretionary, and only the funding
1-20 for health care for active duty military, Native Americans, and
1-21 veterans is subject to the discretion of the United States
1-22 Congress; and

1-23 WHEREAS, Discretionary funding for health care lags behind
1-24 both medical inflation and the increased demand for services; for
1-25 example, the enrollment for veterans' health care increased 134
1-26 percent between fiscal years 1996 and 2004 yet funding increased
1-27 only 34 percent during the same period when adjusted to 1996
1-28 dollars; and

1-29 WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs is the largest
1-30 integrated health care system in the United States and has four
1-31 critical health care missions: to provide health care to veterans,
1-32 to educate and train health care personnel, to conduct medical
1-33 research, and to serve as a backup to the United States Department
1-34 of Defense and support communities in times of crisis; and

1-35 WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs operates 157
1-36 hospitals, with at least one in each of the contiguous states,
1-37 Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia; and

1-38 WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs operates more
1-39 than 850 ambulatory care and community-based outpatient clinics,
1-40 132 nursing homes, 42 residential rehabilitation treatment
1-41 programs, and 88 home care programs; and

1-42 WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs provides a wide
1-43 range of specialized services to meet the unique needs of veterans,
1-44 including spinal cord injury and dysfunction care and
1-45 rehabilitation, blind rehabilitation, traumatic brain injury care,
1-46 post-traumatic stress disorder treatment, amputee care and
1-47 prosthetics programs, mental health and substance abuse programs,
1-48 and long-term care programs; and

1-49 WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs health care
1-50 system is severely underfunded, and had funding for the
1-51 department's medical programs been allowed to grow proportionately
1-52 as the system sought to admit newly eligible veterans following the
1-53 eligibility reform legislation in 1996, the current veterans'
1-54 health care budget would be approximately \$10 billion more; and

1-55 WHEREAS, In a spirit of bipartisan accommodation, members of
1-56 the United States Congress should collectively resolve the problem
1-57 of discretionary funding and jointly fashion an acceptable formula
1-58 for funding the medical programs of the Department of Veterans
1-59 Affairs; now, therefore, be it

1-60 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas
1-61 hereby express its profound gratitude for the sacrifices made by
1-62 veterans, including those who suffer from medical or mental health
1-63 problems resulting from injuries that occurred while serving in the
1-64 United States Armed Forces at home or abroad; and, be it further

2-1 RESOLVED, That the legislature hereby respectfully urge the
2-2 Congress of the United States to support legislation for veterans'
2-3 health care budget reform to allow assured funding; and, be it
2-4 further

2-5 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2-6 copies of this resolution to the secretary of veterans affairs, to
2-7 the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of
2-8 representatives and the president of the senate of the United
2-9 States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to
2-10 the congress with the request that this resolution be officially
2-11 entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of
2-12 the United States of America.

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