

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Funding for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
3 health care under the federal budget is a discretionary
4 program, meaning that it is within the discretion of Congress
5 to determine how much money it will allocate each year for
6 veterans' health care; and

7 WHEREAS, Title 38, United States Code, section 1710(a),
8 provides that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs "shall"
9 furnish hospital care and medical services, but only to the
10 extent that Congress has provided money to cover the costs of
11 care; and

12 WHEREAS, Veterans have earned the right to VA medical
13 care through their extraordinary sacrifices and service to
14 this nation; and

15 WHEREAS, The cumulative effects of insufficient health
16 care funding have now resulted in the rationing of health
17 care; and

18 WHEREAS, The VA has reached capacity at many of its
19 health care facilities and is unable to provide timely access
20 to quality health care; and

21 WHEREAS, The annual shortfall in the VA medical care
22 budget translates directly into higher national health care
23 expenditures; and

24 WHEREAS, When veterans cannot get needed health care
25 services from the VA, they go elsewhere and the cost of care
26 is shifted to state welfare and Medicaid programs or other
27 safety net hospitals where society pays more and the patient
28 suffers; and

29 WHEREAS, The Veterans Health Administration is the most
30 efficient and cost effective health care system providing

1 care for 25 percent to 30 percent less than comparable
2 Medicare rates; and

3 WHEREAS, Even though the VA serves a population of
4 veterans that is older, sicker, and has a higher prevalence
5 of mental and behavioral problems, it does so at well below
6 Medicare rates; and

7 WHEREAS, Many veterans need and depend on the VA health
8 care system and its specialized services in prosthetics, post
9 traumatic stress disorder, spinal cord injury, and blind
10 rehabilitation to treat their service-connected disabilities
11 and meet their unique health care needs; and

12 WHEREAS, It is disingenuous for our government to promise
13 health care to veterans but then make it unattainable because
14 of inadequate funding; and

15 WHEREAS, Making veterans' health care mandatory would
16 ensure the government meet its obligation to provide timely,
17 quality health care to all veterans eligible for care in the
18 VA health care system; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
20 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
21 we hereby urge the United States Congress to amend Title 38
22 of the United States Code to provide a guaranteed level of
23 funding for veterans health care with mandatory funding; and
24 be it further

25 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be presented to
26 the President of the United States, the Senate Majority and
27 Minority Leaders of the U.S. Congress, the Speaker and the
28 Minority Leader of the House, the Committee Chairman of the
29 Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, the House Veterans'
30 Affairs Committee Chairman, and each member of the Illinois
31 Congressional delegation.