

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2008

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SJR 11

Legislative
Resolve No.
32



Supporting federal funding for veterans' health care and urging the United States Congress to ensure adequate funding for veterans' health care.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS the United States Department of Veterans Affairs provides medical care for veterans who have risked their lives to protect the security of the nation; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has the largest integrated health care system in the United States; and

WHEREAS the missions of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs include providing health care to veterans, educating and training health care personnel, conducting medical research, serving as backup to the United States Department of Defense, and supporting communities in times of crisis; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Veterans Affairs provides a wide range of specialized services to meet the unique needs of veterans, including treatment and care for spinal cord injury, blindness, traumatic brain injury, post traumatic stress disorder, amputation injuries, mental health and substance abuse, and conditions requiring long-term care; and

WHEREAS federal discretionary funding for veterans' health care is controlled by the

executive branch and Congress through the budget and appropriation process; and

WHEREAS the United States Government Accountability Office report in 2005 highlighted the lack of resources and staffing available to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for processing an increasing backlog of veterans' claims; and

WHEREAS discretionary funding for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs lags behind both medical inflation and the increased demands for services; for example, the enrollment for veterans' health care increased 134 percent between fiscal years 1996 and 2004, but funding only increased 34 percent during the same period when adjusted to 1996 dollars; and

WHEREAS former United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi has publicly stated that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has been struggling to provide health care to the rapidly rising number of veterans who require health care;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature expresses its profound gratitude for the sacrifices made by veterans who suffer from medical or mental problems resulting from injuries that occurred while serving in the United States Armed Forces; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Congress to ensure adequate funding for veterans' health care.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States; the Honorable Richard B. Cheney, Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable James B. Peake, M.D., United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska Delegation in Congress; and to all other members of the 110th United States Congress.