

Veterans' Partnership Hails Historic House Vote

Oct 08, 2009

The following statement was released on behalf of the Partnership for Veterans Health Care Budget Reform, comprised of The American Legion, AMVETS, Blinded Veterans Association, Disabled American Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Vietnam Veterans of America:

"We applaud the House of Representatives for giving final approval to legislation that will provide sufficient, timely and predictable funding for veterans health care programs. With today's overwhelming House vote to approve H.R. 1016, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, the expected rapid Senate approval of the legislation and the President ready to sign it, we are on the final leg of a long journey to fix the VA health care funding process.

"Enactment of this historic legislation will ensure that veterans health care no longer suffers when Congress fails to pass a budget on time, as has been the case for most of the past two decades, including this year. Instead, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act will authorize advance appropriations for veterans medical care programs, providing VA managers sufficient time to plan how best to deliver quality health care. This legislation also adds much-needed transparency to the VA budget process to help remove partisan politics from interfering with future veterans health care funding.

"The Partnership is grateful to Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Filner, the legislation's sponsor, for leading the fight in the House and successfully reaching an agreement with the Senate that we expect will become law very soon. We are also grateful to many other leaders in the House for the key roles they played in achieving this success, especially House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey, Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Chet Edwards, Veterans' Affairs Health Subcommittee Chairman Mike Michaud, Congressman Phil Hare and Congressman Walter Jones.

"For two decades, the Partnership has worked to reform the budget and appropriations process to ensure that veterans receive the health care they have earned in a timely

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manner. With the historic House vote today, we are on the brink of a victory that will help ensure quality medical care for the men and women who have served, are serving and will serve in defense of our nation.”

[Click here to watch a 21:17 clip of the press conference that was held immediately after oral arguments. Both sides of the issue are presented.](#)