

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
Louisville, Kentucky
August 24, 2009**

Resolution No. 1: The American Legion Policy on VA and National Health Care Reform

Origin: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission

Submitted by: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) was established to provide timely access to quality health care to a well defined patient population; and

WHEREAS, VA's VHA integrated health care provides "the best care anywhere" and is considered by many health care experts as the role model for the rest of the health care industry to emulate for the most cost efficient delivery of quality health care; and

WHEREAS, Funding for VA health care under the Federal budget is a discretionary program determined by Congress and has recently undergone reform to provide VA with sufficient, timely and predictable funding one year in advance, to prevent VA health care budget shortfalls due to year to year uncertainty; and

WHEREAS, VA continues to seek alternative funding streams to supplement limited annual Federal discretionary appropriations to meet the growing demands for quality treatment of enrolled veterans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion supports allowing Medicare Reimbursement for VA as a realistic health care coverage for enrolled, Medicare-eligible veterans seeking treatment of nonservice-connected medical conditions in VA health care facilities; and

WHEREAS, The President is committed to working with Congress to pass comprehensive health reform in order to control rising health care costs, guarantee choice of doctor, and assure high-quality, affordable health care for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, Under the last remaining components of The American Legion's GI Bill of Health proposal, VA would be reimbursed by Medicare and VA would treat veterans, dependents and beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, VA's mission is to "...care for him who borne the battle, his widow and orphan..." which includes the sacrifices made by family members of veterans who are not currently being treated by the VA; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Louisville, Kentucky, August 24, 2009, That The American Legion supports veterans' health care reform for the Department of Veterans Affairs by Congress ensuring sufficient, timely and predictable annual advance appropriations; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress authorize VA to collect Medicare reimbursements from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for the treatment of allowable nonservice-connected medical conditions of enrolled Medicare-eligible patients; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress allow all eligible veterans, dependents, and beneficiaries, especially those who are either uninsured or underinsured, to enroll in the VA's integrated health care delivery system; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge Congress not to reduce or eliminate existing veterans' health care benefits through the VA under any new National Health Care Reform.