



Press Releases

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VVA APPLAUDS 'ASSURED' FUNDING BILL FOR VETERANS HEALTH CARE

(Washington, D.C.) – Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) applauds the introduction of H.R. 2318, sponsored by Congressman Lane Evans, Ranking Member on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, which if enacted into law, would go a long way towards achieving mandatory financing of veterans health care for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"By tying appropriations to a formula based on the number of veterans enrolled in the VA system, this legislation would enable the VA to properly plan to meet the needs of its enrollees in a predictable, stable fashion," said Thomas H. Corey, VVA National President. "But it is also crucial to ensure that the per capita formula is set high enough to do the job. We hope that the House Veterans' Affairs Committee will make it a priority to conduct hearings on this very welcome piece of legislation.

"Every year since 1996, VVA and other veterans' service organizations make the strong case for proper funding for veterans health care. Every year, congressional committees debate just how much ought to go into the VA's budget. Every year, we end up with an appropriation that is not even adequate, much less proper. And every year, we know that the budget battles will have to be fought again the next year, only from a yet more inadequate funding base" Corey said. "This cycle must end."

The Evans bill would set a per capita baseline of funding based on the number of veterans enrolled in the VA health-care system as of July 1 preceding the beginning of the new fiscal year. The bill also sets a formula tying the annual percentage increase to the Consumer Price Index.

"VVA calls for swift, bipartisan endorsement of the concept of 'assured,' or what VVA calls 'obligatory,' funding of veterans health care," Corey said. "VVA believes it is just plain wrong to promise health care to veterans who have earned it by virtue of their service, and then make this promise unattainable because of inadequate funding.

"We understand that the annual uncertainty about funding levels has for too long stymied proper management of resources at VA, often preventing the VA from adequately planning to meet the needs of the growing number of veterans seeking treatment in the most cost-effective manner possible," Corey said.

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Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is the nation's only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA's founding principle is "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."