

RESOLUTION 03-10

SUBJECT: Support Legislation for Mandatory VA Health Care

SOURCE: National Headquarters

WHEREAS, the funding for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care under the Federal budget is a discretionary program, meaning that it is within the discretion of Congress to determine how much money it will allocate each year for veterans' medical care; and

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

WHEREAS, AMVETS, along with the other *Independent Budget Organizations*, has fought for sufficient funding for VA health care and a budget that is reflective of the rising cost of health care and increasing need for medical services; and

WHEREAS, VA remains under funded and unable to provide timely access to quality health care to many of our Nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, making veterans' health care funding mandatory would ensure the government meets its obligation to ensure all veterans eligible for health care in the VA health care system have access to timely quality health care; and

WHEREAS, VA is unable to provide timely access to quality health care to many of our Nation's most severely disabled service-connected veterans; and

WHEREAS, including all veterans currently eligible and enrolled for care in the mandatory health care funding proposal will protect the overall viability of the system and the specialized programs VA has developed to improve the health and well-being of our nation's veterans: Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That AMVETS supports legislation to make VA health care funding mandatory thereby guaranteeing Congress provide sufficient resources to cover the expenses of the veterans' health care program.