

2001 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 783

Offered January 19, 2001

Requesting the Department of Veterans' Affairs to study the need for and operation of a mobile medical facility as a cost-effective way to bring needed services to veterans.

Patron—Cox

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, people are the foundation of every branch of the armed forces and without highly qualified, dedicated men and women, even the most sophisticated weaponry will not provide a deterrent force necessary for this country to remain at peace; and

WHEREAS, military retirees, dependents and military survivors constitute at least 43 percent of the total 8.3 million eligible military medical beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, because of the nature of their service, many former servicemen suffer from a wide array of physical illnesses as well as a number of disabilities that result directly from the trauma of military service in combat; and

WHEREAS, nearly 40 percent of the military treatment facilities around the country have been closed, forcing retirees and other medical beneficiaries to seek care under different plans or to forego treatment because current facilities are inaccessible; and

WHEREAS, some veterans are unemployed and some are homeless and suffer from a variety of disabilities, including substance abuse disorders; and

WHEREAS, some states are beginning to address the problem of reaching out to veterans to protect them as they have done for their country; and

WHEREAS, in at least one state, a mobile service center, contained in a van equipped with two exam rooms as well as facilities for dental care, travels around the state to provide interventions and immediate assistance of food, clothing, health screening and assessment, Veterans' Administration benefit determination, counseling, and assessment of housing, mental health, substance abuse, employment, educational, and vocational needs; and

WHEREAS, one state enlisted part of the funds from the Department of Veterans' Affairs and solicited private donations and contributions to complete the purchase; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Veterans' Affairs study the need for and operation of a mobile medical facility as a cost-effective way to bring needed services to veterans who are unable to travel to Veterans' Administration medical centers. The Department shall include in its study an evaluation of methods to fund the purchase of such a mobile medical facility, including federal funds or private contributions, and an assessment of the staffing and operational needs of the mobile facility, including the use of volunteers from public service organizations.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department for this study, upon request.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 2002 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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