

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	4 - 0 - 1
Yeas:	Kruse, Morse, Shields, Monnes Anderson
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Bates
Prepared By:	Brian Nieubuurt, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Urges Congress to mandate a limit on mental health care caseloads.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Mental health caseloads and treatment wait times
- Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision
- Potential positive revenue impact

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: A study conducted in 2008 found that a substantial number of service members returning from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan develop mental health problems. This study also found that mental health professionals are overwhelmed by the volume of their caseloads, resulting in longer waiting periods for veterans seeking care and longer travel times for veterans to access available professionals. The Legislative Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care received input indicating a manageable caseload for counselor is 60 veterans; whereas the current average caseload is estimated to exceed 100 veterans per counselor.

House Joint Memorial 4 urges the United States Congress to enact legislation to reduce the patient caseload of Veterans Health Administration mental health professionals to no more than 60 veterans per counselor.