

D R A F T

SUMMARY

Urges Congress to improve and support efforts to bring health care to veterans in rural communities.

JOINT MEMORIAL

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To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-eighth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas there are approximately 22 million veterans living today, 5.3 million of whom live in rural areas; and

Whereas 3.2 million veterans who live in rural areas are enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) health care system; and

Whereas 2.6 million patients enrolled in the VHA health care system have a service-connected disability; and

Whereas 960,000 veterans from rural areas have a service-connected disability; and

Whereas a disproportionate share of all service members are from rural areas; and

Whereas many veterans from rural areas return to their rural communities after their service period; and

Whereas since its inception in 2007, the Veterans Health Administration Office of Rural Health has supported nearly 2,000 projects and programs to make health care more accessible for veterans in rural areas; and

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 Whereas despite this progress, the Office of Rural Health has made in-
2 cremental and inconsistent progress in building an accessible health care
3 infrastructure to deliver services to veterans in rural areas; and

4 Whereas health care for veterans in rural areas remains more costly and
5 more difficult to access than health care for veterans in urban areas; and

6 Whereas efforts should be made to improve the quality of care at and ef-
7 ficiency of health care facilities serving veterans in rural areas; now, there-
8 fore,

9 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

10 That we, the members of the Seventy-eighth Legislative Assembly, urge
11 the Congress of the United States to support the mission of the Veterans
12 Health Administration Office of Rural Health and efforts to improve access
13 to health care for veterans in rural areas; and be it further

14 Resolved, That we urge Congress to improve and support outreach efforts
15 and accelerate the pace of efforts to bring health care to veterans in rural
16 communities; and be it further

17 Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of
18 the United States, to the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the
19 House of Representatives and to each member of the Oregon Congressional
20 Delegation.

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