

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION: 07-14-C
SUBMITTED BY: Department of Michigan
SUBJECT: The American Legion policy on the State Veterans Home Program

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, State Veterans Homes were founded for indigent and disabled Civil War veterans beginning in the late 1800s and have continued to serve subsequent generations of veterans for over one hundred years; and

WHEREAS, Today, there are 133 State Veterans Homes facilities in a total of 49 states and territories with over 30,000 beds providing nursing home, hospital and domiciliary care, with more capacity being added annually; and

WHEREAS, The State Veterans Home Program has proven to be a cost-effective provider of quality care to many of the nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, This program is an important adjunct to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) own nursing, hospital and domiciliary programs; and

WHEREAS, Title 38, United States Code, authorizes VA per diem payments for veterans residing in State Veterans Homes; and

WHEREAS, Under the provisions of Title 38, United States Code, VA is also authorized to make payments to states to assist in the construction and maintenance of State Veterans Homes; and

WHEREAS, The Grant for Construction of State Veterans Home Program, which provides funding for 65% of the total cost of building new veterans homes, has not been able to keep pace with the number of grant applications; and

WHEREAS, The enactment of the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits bill makes it mandatory that VA provide institutional care and nursing home service to veterans with service-connected disabilities rated at 70% or higher; and

WHEREAS, Currently the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will only provide these services to 70% or higher service-connected veterans, if the veteran either resides in a VA long-term care facility or a private contracted facility, but not in a State Veterans Home; and

WHEREAS, Veterans with a rating of 50% or greater service connection receive VA pharmaceutical benefits at no cost; and

WHEREAS, Pharmaceutical services are available at the Veterans State Homes for these veterans, but they are required to unnecessarily travel to VA facilities to receive them; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing the growth in long-term health care needs of older veterans, it is essential to maintain the State Veterans Home Program as a viable and important adjunct health care provider to the VA system; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support enactment of legislation to require VA per diem payments at a rate of 50% of the national average cost of providing care in a State Veterans Home; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge Congress to pass legislation that adequately funds the State Veterans Home Construction Grant projects; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That VA should allow for full reimbursement of nursing home care to 70% service-connected veterans or higher, if the veteran resides in a State Veterans Home; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That The American Legion support the receipt of prescription drugs and over-the-counter medication in State Homes by veterans enrolled in the VA health care system who have a VA disability rating of 50% or greater; and, be it

FINALLY RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Michigan, in annual Department Convention assembled in Dearborn, Michigan, June 14-17, 2007, That The American Legion urge the National Association of State Veterans Homes and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to support mutual planning efforts, enhanced medical sharing agreements, and enhanced-use construction contracts with qualified providers.