

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION: 08-14-C
SUBMITTED BY: The American Legion, Department of Michigan
SUBJECT: Oppose increased co-payments and an enrollment fee for Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans to receive VA health care

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Since the enactment of Public Law (PL) 104-262, that authorized eligibility reform and open enrollment process, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA), has experienced a dramatic growth from 2.5 million veterans to over 7 million veterans enrolled in VA health care; and

WHEREAS, FY 2002 saw the astronomical growth of Priority Group 7 veterans seeking health care at their local VA medical facility and the creation of a new Priority Group 8; and

WHEREAS, VA, upon creating the new Priority Group 8, placed an immediate suspension on all new Priority Group 8 enrollments; and

WHEREAS, VHA is authorized to bill, collect, and retain co-payments and the third party insurance payment of Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans; and

WHEREAS, During the past several years, VA has proposed to increase the outpatient co-payment from \$15 to \$20 and the prescription co-payment from \$8 to \$15 per 30 day supply, as well as, levy a \$250 enrollment fee on Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, VA proposed to eliminate the co-payment offset (reduction in payment) to Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans who have third party insurance; and

WHEREAS, The co-payment increases and enrollment fees could suppress the demand for VA services at the expense of Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans who may not be able to afford the co-payment increases and out-of-pocket enrollment fee; and

WHEREAS, VA believes these initiatives will ultimately drive 1.2 million veterans away from the VA health care system; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Michigan, in annual Department Convention assembled in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 19-22, 2008, That The American Legion adamantly oppose any effort to increase co-payments or impose an enrollment fee for Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans to receive VA health care.