

House Resolution 815

By: Representatives Randall of the 107th, Greene-Johnson of the 60th, Post 3, and Buckner of the 82nd

A RESOLUTION

1 Memorializing Congress to ensure mandatory funding for veterans' health care; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, funding for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care under the federal
4 budget is a discretionary program, meaning that is within the discretion of Congress to
5 determine how much money it will allocate each year for veterans' health care; and

6 WHEREAS, Title 38, United States Code, Section 1710(a), provides that the Secretary of
7 Veterans Affairs "shall" furnish hospital care and medical services, but only to the extent
8 Congress has provided money to cover the costs of care; and

9 WHEREAS, veterans have earned the right to VA medical care through their extraordinary
10 sacrifices and service to this nation; and

11 WHEREAS, the cumulative effects of insufficient health care funding have now resulted in
12 the rationing of health care; and

13 WHEREAS, VA has reached capacity at many of its health care facilities and is unable to
14 provide timely access to quality health care; and

15 WHEREAS, the annual shortfall in the VA medical care budget translates directly into higher
16 national health care expenditures; and

17 WHEREAS, when veterans cannot get needed health care services from the VA, they go
18 elsewhere and the cost of care is shifted to state welfare and Medicaid programs or other
19 safety net hospitals where society pays more and the patient suffers; and

1 WHEREAS, the veterans health administration is the most efficient and cost-effective health
2 care system providing care for 25 percent to 30 percent less than comparable Medicare
3 services; and

4 WHEREAS, even though VA serves a population of veterans that is older, sicker, and has
5 a higher prevalence of mental and behavioral health problems, it does so at well below
6 Medicare rates; and

7 WHEREAS, many veterans need and depend on the VA health care system and its
8 specialized services in prosthetics, post traumatic stress disorder, spinal cord injury, and
9 blind rehabilitation to treat their service connected disabilities and meet their unique health
10 care needs; and

11 WHEREAS, it is disingenuous for our government to promise health care to veterans but
12 then make it unattainable because of inadequate funding; and

13 WHEREAS, making veterans' health care mandatory would ensure that the government
14 meets its obligation to provide timely, quality health care to all veterans eligible for care in
15 the VA health care system.

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
17 this body hereby urges the United States Congress to amend Title 38 of the United States
18 Code to provide a guaranteed level of funding for veterans' health care with mandatory
19 funding.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
21 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the President of the United
22 States, Senate Majority and Minority Leaders of the U.S. Congress, Speaker of the House,
23 Committee Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Committee Chairman of
24 the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, and each member of the Georgia Delegation to
25 Congress.