

## 1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

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

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

12 WHEREAS, Veterans have earned the right to VA medical  
13 care through their extraordinary sacrifices and service to  
14 this nation; and

15 WHEREAS, The cumulative effects of insufficient health  
16 care funding have now resulted in the rationing of health  
17 care; and

18 WHEREAS, Veterans Affairs has reached capacity at many of  
19 its health care facilities and is unable to provide timely  
20 access to quality health care; and

21 WHEREAS, The annual shortfall in the VA medical care  
22 budget translates directly into higher national health care  
23 expenditures; and

24 WHEREAS, When veterans cannot get needed health care  
25 services from Veterans Affairs, they go elsewhere and the  
26 cost of care is shifted to State welfare and Medicaid  
27 programs or other safety net hospitals where society pays  
28 more and the patient suffers; and

29 WHEREAS, The Veterans Health Administration is the most  
30 efficient and cost-effective health care system, providing

1 care for 25% to 30% less than comparable Medicare services;  
2 and

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

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

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

15 WHEREAS, Making veterans' health care mandatory would  
16 ensure that the government met its obligation to provide  
17 timely, quality health care to all veterans eligible for care  
18 in the VA health care system; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
20 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
21 we urge Congress to amend Title 38 of the United States Code  
22 to provide a guaranteed level of funding for veterans' health  
23 care with mandatory funding; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
25 delivered to the President of the United States, the  
26 President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate and Chairman of the  
27 Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, the Speaker of the U.S.  
28 House of Representatives and Chairman of the House Veterans'  
29 Affairs Committee, and each member of the Illinois  
30 congressional delegation.