



HR0968

LRB099 17791 MST 42153 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): Veterans Health Administration facilitates health care for U.S. veterans that include both physical and mental health services; and

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WHEREAS, Veteran Health Administration hospitals and health care clinics are located throughout the United States to offer high quality care to our nation's veterans; and

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WHEREAS, Basic eligibility for veterans to qualify for health benefits through the VA are, serving in active military service and being separated under anything other than a dishonorable discharge; current and former members of the reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may also be eligible for VA health benefits; and

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WHEREAS, The VA operates an annual enrollment system that helps to manage the provision of health care and applies a variety of factors during the application verification process when determining a veteran's eligibility for enrollment; once a veteran is enrolled, he/she remains enrolled in the VA health care system with access to certain VA health benefits; and

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1 WHEREAS, Recent studies on veteran access to health care
2 have shown that former members of the reserves and National
3 Guard face greater barriers to access through the VA health
4 care system; these veterans face a more complex set of
5 eligibility rules and barriers to gain access; and

6 WHEREAS, These studies have shown that despite lengthy
7 periods of service, many reserves and National Guard veterans
8 are not eligible for health care and other basic benefits
9 provided by the VA because they have not met the complex
10 "active duty" and "length of service" requirements to meet the
11 legal definition of "veteran" used by the VA; and

12 WHEREAS, Veteran status for VA benefits depends on a number
13 of factors, such as having served during wartime (which
14 requires 90 continuous days of service), or peacetime (which
15 requires 180 continuous days of service), and whether the
16 veteran was called to duty under state or federal law; and

17 WHEREAS, These complex rules often lead to unfair results
18 and make it difficult to receive proper health care for
19 veterans that were in the reserves or National Guard, who
20 served in the U.S. Armed Forces both during times of peace and
21 war; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
2 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
3 urge the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to make
4 changes to eligibility for health care through the Veterans
5 Health Administration to allow for a better rules process to
6 assist veterans from the reserves and National Guard in
7 receiving the proper health care they have earned for serving
8 in the United States Armed Forces; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
10 presented to the President of the United States, Barack Obama,
11 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Robert McDonald, President
12 of the Senate, Mitch McConnell, and the Speaker of the House of
13 Representatives, Paul Ryan.