

107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 359

Expressing the sense of Congress opposing the enactment of any proposal for the establishment of a deductible for veterans receiving health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2002

Mr. STRICKLAND submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress opposing the enactment of any proposal for the establishment of a deductible for veterans receiving health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Whereas the patriotism, devotion, and sacrifice of the Nation's veterans have enabled the United States to be the most free nation on Earth and its citizens to enjoy unequalled rights, privileges, and prosperity;

Whereas through their service the Nation's veterans made extraordinary sacrifices and contributions and have earned certain benefits in return;

Whereas the Congress needs to ensure that the traditional philosophy of providing free benefits to veterans as repayment and recognition for the unusual rigors and personal

deprivation they underwent for the country is not abandoned;

Whereas despite the sacrifices made by veterans, the fiscal year 2003 budget includes a proposal that veterans with nonservice-connected disabilities who have incomes above a certain threshold and are in the priority group for health care referred to as “Priority Group 7” be subject to an annual deductible for Department of Veterans Affairs health care in the amount of \$1,500;

Whereas under that proposal, veterans would be assessed a deductible for both inpatient and outpatient care at a rate of 45 percent of the Department’s cost of providing such care until they reach the deductible amount;

Whereas in addition to the proposed \$1,500 deductible, veterans would continue to be required to pay the existing pharmacy copayment of \$7 for each 30-day prescription and would continue to be subject to existing health care copayments after reaching the \$1,500 deductible;

Whereas although the fiscal year 2003 budget provides the Department of Veterans Affairs with a \$6,100,000,000 increase over the fiscal year 2002 budget, that increase is largely attributable to increased collections in the annual deductible and prescription copayments; and

Whereas the budget proposal for a \$1,500 Department of Veterans Affairs health care deductible is clearly a move to shift health care costs from the Government to veterans and would constitute an intolerable and unnecessary financial hardship to affected veterans: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that a de-

- 1 ductible for veterans receiving health care from the De-
- 2 partment of Veterans Affairs should not be enacted.

