

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO ENSURE FULL MANDATORY FUNDING FOR VETERANS' HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND TO RECOGNIZE THE HEALTH CARE OBLIGATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE COUNTRY'S VETERANS.

WHEREAS, the mission and motto of the United States department of veterans affairs is "to care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan"; and

WHEREAS, President George Washington stated, "The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportionate to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country"; and

WHEREAS, whenever the United States military has been called upon to send forces into harm's way, all who become soldiers, our sons and daughters alike, have proudly answered the call; and

WHEREAS, we, as citizens of the United States, have promised our troops, through military enlistment contracts, comprehensive, quality health care for those veterans honorably discharged from the United States armed forces, past, present and future; and

WHEREAS, while the legislators and legislative bodies of our government at all levels have recognized the importance of

supporting those who serve the United States, legislation itself has fallen short of meeting the health care needs of our veterans; and the current discretionary funding mechanisms for veterans' health care are beset by numerous flaws, preventing many veterans from receiving the quality health care they earned and deserve; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2006, the United States senate voted against adopting mandatory funding for veterans' health care services that would have ensured mandatory funding for veterans' health care needs; and

WHEREAS, a government accountability office report issued in 2005 highlighted the lack of resources experienced by the veterans health administration and its understaffed workforce as they attempt to process an increasing backlog of veterans' claims; and

WHEREAS, a former department of veterans affairs secretary, Anthony Principi, has publicly stated that the department of veterans affairs has been struggling to provide promised health care services to the rapidly rising number of veterans requiring health care services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional delegation be urged to ensure that health care obligations for veterans be recognized; that the New Mexico congressional delegation ensure that legislation be introduced into the

United States house of representatives and the United States senate proposing full funding for veterans' health care; and that legislation ensuring full mandatory funding for veterans' health care services be approved by both houses of congress and sent to the president for signing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that full mandatory funding of veterans' services be supported and that the great sacrifice made for all Americans by those who enter the armed services of the United States be recognized; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation, the president of the United States and the secretary of the United States department of veterans affairs.