

1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 URGING CONGRESS TO INVESTIGATE THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
3 OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND THE DELAY IN THE VETERANS AFFAIRS'
4 SCHEDULE FOR RATING DISABILITIES SYSTEM'S FAILURE TO MAKE
5 RATING DETERMINATIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER.

6
7 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a significant number of people
8 who have served in the United States armed forces and have
9 contributed greatly to the security of the state and this
10 great nation; and

11 WHEREAS, a significant number of veterans in New Mexico
12 were injured in combat or while training for combat; and

13 WHEREAS, the United States department of veterans
14 affairs' schedule for rating disabilities is based on a
15 veteran's severity of the veteran's service-connected
16 condition and determines how much disability compensation the
17 veteran will receive each month in benefits; and

18 WHEREAS, the veterans affairs' disability rating system
19 has consistently taken months and sometimes years to properly
20 rate veterans who made huge sacrifices by serving; and

21 WHEREAS, determinations for veterans with terminal
22 diagnoses are taking several months when these determinations
23 are supposed to take no more than thirty days; and

24 WHEREAS, many veterans suffer from physical and severe
25 mental health issues brought on or exacerbated by military

1 service; and

2 WHEREAS, many veterans cannot fully participate in the
3 workforce or earn a living due to these injuries, nor can
4 they afford the health care needed to deal with these health
5 problems; and

6 WHEREAS, many veterans are not aware that their military
7 retirement benefits do not cover end-of-life care, including
8 care in a long-term care facility, home health care and
9 numerous other benefits only available to veterans with a
10 minimum seventy percent service-connected rating; and

11 WHEREAS, previously, the disability rating system was
12 functioning more smoothly, and determinations were being done
13 in a more expeditious manner; and

14 WHEREAS, the United States department of veterans
15 affairs has failed to maintain the standards and time lines
16 to award disability benefits in a timely manner;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
18 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that congress be urged to investigate the
19 United States department of veterans affairs and the veterans
20 affairs' schedule for rating disabilities system's failure to
21 make rating determinations in a timely manner; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that congress be requested to
23 honor the country's commitment to all veterans by requiring
24 that the department of veterans affairs determine disability
25 ratings within ninety days of filing for determination and

1 that determinations be expedited within thirty days for
2 claims based on terminal illness and for veterans who have
3 been placed in hospice; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that congress be requested to
5 acknowledge and address the United States department of
6 veterans affairs' failure to protect veterans who have
7 suffered so much for the freedoms that people enjoy in the
8 United States; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation.

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