



News From The ...

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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Improvements in New Construction for Veterans Facilities Passes House

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, the House of Representatives passed the Veterans Health Care Facilities Capital Improvement Act of 2011 (H.R. 2646—as amended), with a vote of 412-3. The Veterans Health Care Facilities Capital Improvement Act of 2011 ensures funding for VA hospital construction projects and medical facility leases in FY2012, as well as extends special at-need programs for homeless veterans, which are set to expire at the end of this fiscal year, September 30, 2011.

“The extension of these programs will provide comprehensive supportive services to help homeless and at-risk veterans find permanent housing, overcome substance use and other issues, gain meaningful employment, and put them on the path to being productive, successful members of our society,” stated Rep. Bill Johnson, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations.

Construction projects include seismic corrections to VA medical facilities in Seattle, Washington, West Los Angeles, California, St. Louis, Missouri, and San Juan, Puerto Rico; major construction at facilities in Palo Alto, California, and Fayetteville, Arkansas; and the expansion of construction projects in Orlando, Florida. The legislation also includes VA lease authorizations for outpatient clinics in Columbus, Georgia, Fort Wayne, Indiana, Rochester, New York, Salem, Oregon, San Jose, California, South Bend, Indiana, and Springfield, Missouri. All of the projects were requested by the Administration and vetted by the Committee to ensure that only projects that were the highest in priority were advanced.

“The VA provides high quality medical care and services to our honored veterans through an extensive and diverse portfolio of medical facilities,” Johnson said. “Congress and the Administration have an obligation to ensure that this national infrastructure is appropriately maintained.”

Full or partial funding for all of the projects has either been appropriated, or will soon be appropriated.

“I am pleased by the dedication and efficiency of this Committee in meeting the needs of our veterans,” stated Rep. Jeff Miller, Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. “Through this legislation we ensure that VA medical facilities will continue to meet the needs of America’s veterans, today, and tomorrow.”

It is expected that following this vote, the Senate will act to take up H.R. 2646—as amended, to ensure the legislation is presented to the President for signature prior to the end of the fiscal year.

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