



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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FY 2008 OMNIBUS SUMMARY: MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Bill Total

2007 Enacted:	\$49.8 billion
President's Request:	\$60.7 billion
Omnibus:	\$60.2 billion – Base Bill
	\$3.7 billion – Emergency Funds: Veterans

KEY INVESTMENTS

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS: \$43.1 billion, \$6.6 billion above 2007 and \$3.7 billion over the President's request for veterans medical care, claims processing, and facility improvements.

*Increases for veterans above the President's request are provided as an emergency available at the President's request.

Veterans Health Administration, \$37.2 billion, \$2.6 billion over the President's request and \$4.5 billion over 2007 for veterans medical care. The Veterans Health Administration estimates they will treat more than 5.8 million patients in 2008 including more than 263,345 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, 54,000 more than fiscal year 2007.

- **Medical Services:** \$29 billion, \$1.9 billion above the President request and \$3.5 billion above 2007 to improve access to medical services for all veterans.
 - **Mental Health and Substance Abuse:** \$2.9 billion, \$100 million above 2007 and matching the President's request, for specialty mental health care and \$429 million, \$70 million above the President's request and \$72 million above 2007 for the Substance Abuse Program. The President's request did not even provide for inflation within the Department's Substance Abuse Program.
 - **Assistance for Homeless Vets:** \$130 million, \$23 million above the President's request and \$38 million above 2007 to help care for an 2,300 additional homeless veterans.
 - **Health Care Sharing Incentive Fund:** a minimum of \$15 million, to be used for joint programs with the Department of Defense to increase research, improve access to care, and ensure a more seamless transition for our veterans, particularly in the areas of greatest concern for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan – traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, increased survival of severe burns, and amputation.
- **Medical Administration:** \$3.5 billion, \$75 million above the President's request and \$339 million above 2007 to ensure the efficient operation of the Department's health care system.
- **Medical Facilities:** \$4.1 billion, \$508 million above the President's request and \$530 million above 2007 for on-going maintenance and renovations of existing facilities.
- **Medical and Prosthetic Research:** \$480 million, \$69 million above the President's request and \$66 million above 2007, for research to improve the quality of life for injured and aging veterans.

Major Construction: \$1.1 billion, \$342 million above the President's request, to fulfill the Department's commitment to fund recommendations made by the Capitol Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission.

Extended Care Facilities: \$165 million, \$80 million above 2007, for grants to states for construction and modification of extended care facilities. The funding level will satisfy all currently identified life and safety needs and still provide funding for the construction of three new facilities.

General Operating Expenses: \$1.6 billion, \$133 million over the President's request and \$124 million above 2007 to enable the Department to hire roughly 1,800 additional claims processors to work-down the backlog of benefits claims and to reduce the time to process new claims. Nearly 400,000 claims have exceeded the 160 day goal for processing.

Information Technology, \$2 billion, \$752 million above 2007, \$107 million above the President's request to improve the health records system to help ensure that medical information follows patients as they transition from the Department of Defense health system to the VA health system.

Inspector General: \$80.5 million, \$9.9 million above 2007 and \$7.9 million over the President's request, reversing a three-year decline in staffing for the Office. This funding will enable the Office to hire 50 people to provide necessary oversight of departmental operations, ensuring that resources are spent wisely and that veterans receive the quality care they deserve.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION: \$20.6 billion, \$4.7 billion above 2007 (including BRAC in the supplemental). The historic increase is largely for Base Realignment and Closure and plans to increase the size of the Army and Marine Corps.

2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) and Re-stationing: \$7.2 billion, \$1.6 billion above 2007 (including BRAC in the supplemental).

1990 BRAC: \$295 million, \$43 million above 2007 and \$75 million above the President's request to address an estimated \$3.5 billion environmental cleanup backlog for previous BRAC rounds.

Military Housing: \$2.9 billion, supporting the elimination of a further 13,727 inadequate family housing units.

Growing the Force: \$2.8 billion to support the Administration's proposal to increase the size of the Army by 65,000, the Marine Corps by 27,000, and the Guard and Reserve by 9,200 over the next five years.

RELATED AGENCIES

American Battle Monuments Commission: \$55.6 million, \$2.5 million above the President's request for military monuments and cemeteries around the world.

United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims: \$22.7 million, \$1.5 million above the President's request and \$2.5 million above 2007 to review appeals from veterans denied benefits.

Cemeterial Expenses: \$31.2 million, \$4.3 million above the President's request and \$1.2 million above 2007 to improve the safety and appearance of Arlington cemetery.

Armed Forces Retirement Home: \$55.7 million from the Trust Fund, the same as the President's request for operation and maintenance of the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

Compare to the [House passed bill](#).