

Key Accomplishments for Veterans in the 110th Congress:

Increases in support for the VA health care system

- \$11.8 billion in increases over 12 months
- 30% increase in the VA funding baseline from January 2007 (from \$33.1 billion to \$43.1 billion)
- Other key increases since January 2007
 - Medical Services \$29.1 billion (from \$22.5 billion, a 29% increase)
 - Medical Administration \$3.5 billion (from \$2.9 billion, a 21% increase)
 - Medical Facilities \$4.1 billion (from \$3.3 billion, a 24% increase)
 - Medical Research \$480 million (from \$412 million, a 17% increase)
 - Substance Abuse \$428 million (from \$358 million, a 20% increase)
 - Homeless veterans \$130 million (from \$63.6 million, a 104% increase)

240% increase in non-recurring maintenance at VA facilities since January 2007 to prevent a Walter Reed-like tragedy from occurring in the VA system

- \$415 million in FY 2006, \$1.08 billion in FY 2008 bill.
- VA's Asset Management Plan notes that to adequately maintain the VA's \$40 billion infrastructure, between \$800 million and \$1.6 billion is required annually.
- Major Construction FY08 request: \$727 million
- Major Construction FY08 enacted: \$1.07 billion
- Minor Construction FY08 request: \$233.4 million
- Minor Construction FY08 enacted: \$631.5 million (added \$397.1 million)

Focusing on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury.

- Required the VA to spend at least \$2.9 billion on mental health care. (In FY06, the requirement was a minimum of \$2.2 billion, making this a 32% increase.)
- Added \$66 million for a new Level 1 Polytrauma Center in San Antonio
- Added \$100 million in the Iraq supplemental (5/07) for mental health care
- Added \$8 million for additional Polytrauma support clinic teams
- Added \$5.4 million for additional Polytrauma points of contact

Focusing on the 400,000 disability claims backlog by hiring additional claims processors

- Added 3,100 new claims processors to the VA
 - 400 new hires funded through FY07 Continuing Resolution
 - 800 new hires funded through Iraq War Supplemental Appropriations
 - 1,800 new hires funded by FY08 Appropriations Omnibus

Total claims processors for Compensation and Pension benefits

- End of FY07: 9,068
- Projected end of FY08: 10,998

Supporting rural veterans who live far from VA facilities

- Increased the travel reimbursement from 11 cents/mile to 28.5 cents/mile. (First increase since 1979, when gas was 95 cents/gallon.)
-