A JOINT MESSAGE FROM

DAV and the DAV Auxiliary

Senator Mazie Hirono introduced S. 683, the Keeping Our Commitment to Disabled Veterans Act of 2017. This bill would extend the requirement for VA to provide nursing home care to veterans with service-connected conditions rated at 70 percent or more, as well as those who need such care for a service-connected disability, or who have a rating of total disability based on individual unemployability.

DAV Resolution No. 142 calls for support of legislation to expand the comprehensive program of Long-Term Support Services (LTSS) for service-connected disabled veterans irrespective of their disability ratings. The resolution notes that there is a subset of service-connected veterans with chronic or terminal illnesses who need LTSS and will require institutional placements. According to a recent DAV family caregiver survey, most caregivers indicated that their loved one would need care in an institution now (26%) or would need institutional care in the future without their support (49%). Without family caregivers, institutional care is the only alternative for many veterans with severe disabilities.

According to VA, there were around 21,300 veterans nationwide who met the legislative mandate for nursing home care in fiscal year (FY) 2016. VA estimates there will be over 21,800 veterans treated under this legislative mandate in 2017 and this number is projected to increase to over 22,200 in FY 2018 and over 22,600 in FY 2019. Without extension of the current mandate by Congress beyond December 31, 2017, VA would no longer be required to provide this critical LTSS coverage to service-disabled veterans.

Please ask your Senator to cosponsor and to support passage of the Keeping Our Commitment to Disabled Veterans Act of 2017, S. 683.

As always thank you for your support of disabled veterans and the DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network).