

110TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6939

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide two-fiscal year budget authority for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

Mr. FILNER (for himself, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. HARE, and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide two-fiscal year budget authority for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) Title 38, United States Code, authorizes the  
6 Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish hospital and  
7 domiciliary care, medical services, nursing home  
8 care, and related services to eligible and enrolled vet-

1       erans, but such services can only be provided to the  
2       extent that appropriated resources and facilities are  
3       available for such purposes.

4               (2) For 19 out of the past 21 fiscal years, Con-  
5       gress has not appropriated funds for medical care  
6       provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs be-  
7       fore the commencement of the new fiscal year, caus-  
8       ing the Department great challenges in planning and  
9       managing health care for enrolled veterans, to the  
10      detriment of those veterans.

11              (3) The cumulative effects of insufficient, late  
12      and unpredictable health care funding endanger the  
13      viability of the system and the specialized health  
14      care resources the Department has developed to  
15      maintain and improve the health of the Nation's sick  
16      and disabled veterans.

17              (4) Approved appropriation levels for the health  
18      care programs of the Department have too often  
19      proven insufficient over the past decade, requiring  
20      the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ration health  
21      care services and Congress to approve supplemental  
22      appropriations.

23              (5) Providing sufficient, timely, and predictable  
24      funding would ensure the government meets its obli-  
25      gation to provide health care to sick and disabled

1 veterans and ensure that all veterans enrolled for  
2 care in the Department of Veterans Affairs health  
3 care system have ready access to timely, quality  
4 services.

5 (6) Providing sufficient, timely, and predictable  
6 funding to the veterans health care system would  
7 eliminate year-to-year uncertainty on funding levels  
8 that has prevented the Department of Veterans Af-  
9 fairs from being able to adequately plan for and  
10 meet the needs of veterans who are enrolled in the  
11 Department health care system.

12 **SEC. 2. TWO-FISCAL YEAR BUDGET AUTHORITY FOR CER-**  
13 **TAIN MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS OF THE DE-**  
14 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

15 (a) TWO-FISCAL YEAR BUDGET AUTHORITY.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 38, United  
17 States Code, is amended by inserting after section  
18 113 the following new section:

19 **“§ 113A. Two-fiscal year budget authority for certain**  
20 **medical care accounts**

21 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning with fiscal year 2010,  
22 new discretionary budget authority provided in an appro-  
23 priations Act for the appropriations accounts of the De-  
24 partment specified in subsection (b) shall be made avail-  
25 able for the fiscal year involved and shall include new dis-

1 cretionary budget authority first available after the end  
2 of such fiscal year for the subsequent fiscal year.

3 “(b) MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS.—The medical care  
4 accounts of the Department specified in this subsection  
5 are the medical care accounts of the Veterans Health Ad-  
6 ministration as follows:

7 “(1) Medical Services.

8 “(2) Medical Administration.

9 “(3) Medical Facilities.”.

10 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
11 tions at the beginning of chapter 1 of such title is  
12 amended by inserting after the item relating to sec-  
13 tion 113 the following new item:

“113A. Two-fiscal year budget authority for certain medical care accounts.”.

14 **SEC. 3. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES**  
15 **STUDY ON ADEQUACY AND ACCURACY OF**  
16 **BASELINE MODEL PROJECTIONS OF THE DE-**  
17 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR**  
18 **HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURES.**

19 (a) STUDY OF ADEQUACY AND ACCURACY OF BASE-  
20 LINE MODEL PROJECTIONS.—The Comptroller General of  
21 the United States shall conduct a study of the adequacy  
22 and accuracy of the budget projections made by the En-  
23 rollee Health Care Projection Model, or its equivalent, as  
24 utilized for the purpose of estimating and projecting  
25 health care expenditures of the Department of Veterans

1 Affairs (in this section referred to as the “Model”) with  
2 respect to the fiscal year involved and the subsequent four  
3 fiscal years.

4 (b) REPORTS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date of  
6 each year in 2010, 2011, and 2012, on which the  
7 President submits the budget request for the next  
8 fiscal year under section 1105 of title 31, United  
9 States Code, the Comptroller General shall submit to  
10 the appropriate committees of Congress and to the  
11 Secretary a report.

12 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report under this para-  
13 graph shall include, for the fiscal year beginning in  
14 the year in which such report is submitted, the fol-  
15 lowing:

16 (A) A statement whether the amount re-  
17 quested in the budget of President for expendi-  
18 tures of the Department for health care in such  
19 fiscal year is consistent with anticipated ex-  
20 penditures of the Department for health care in  
21 such fiscal year as determined utilizing the  
22 Model.

23 (B) The basis for such statement.

24 (C) Such additional information as the  
25 Comptroller General determines appropriate.

1           (3) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—Each re-  
2           port submitted under this subsection shall also be  
3           made available to the public.

4           (4) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS  
5           DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appro-  
6           priate committees of Congress” means—

7                   (A) the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs,  
8                   Appropriations, and the Budget of the Senate;  
9                   and

10                   (B) the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs,  
11                   Appropriations, and the Budget of the House of  
12                   Representatives.

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