

## 3/03/2004 Moran: Good News for VA Facilities, Veterans

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Report Supports Kansas VA Facilities

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced that, after more than four years of gathering data about Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, the Department of Veterans Affairs Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission released its findings on the efficiency and necessity of the VA facilities in Kansas. The CARES Commission recommended expanding all Kansas VA facilities after reviewing all of the VA facilities in the United States to ensure that the current and future health care needs of veterans will be met.

"This report is good news for veterans because it recommends that all Kansas VA facilities increase their services and expand their facilities," Moran said. "At a time when more and more veterans are entering the VA system, now is not the time to cut services. It is important that we meet their healthcare needs and that we keep our Kansas VA facilities in full operation."

The commission also recommended enhancing the primary and specialty care services at the Robert J. Dole Department of Veterans Affairs Medical and Regional Office Center in Wichita as well as continuing the operation of the Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center in Leavenworth. The board recommended continuing inpatient psychiatry services at Topeka, expanding outpatient substance abuse treatment at Leavenworth, and maintaining nursing home care beds at Leavenworth. Emergency care services would continue at the Topeka and Leavenworth campuses. The commission also recommended an additional community-based outpatient VA clinic for Kansas.

The CARES Commission submitted its finding to the Secretary of the Department of Veteran Affairs, Anthony Principi. The Secretary will review the Commission's findings and submit his decisions to Congress to review and authorize. Secretary Principi visited the VA facilities in Wichita, Salina, Topeka and Leavenworth with Moran in 2002.

"Our country owes a tremendous debt to our veterans, and I am extremely pleased that the CARES commission has recognized the importance of Kansas veterans by improving the access to and the quality of health care services at VA facilities," Moran concluded.

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