

9/19/2007 Moran Introduces Legislation to Enhance Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors

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Legislation Implements Recommendations of Dole-Shalala Commission

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced the introduction of legislation to improve the care and support of America's returning service members.

The legislation implements the recommendations of the Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors. The Commission was formed by the President and led by former Kansas Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala following the discovery of poor conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Dole and Shalala were on Capitol Hill today to present the Commission's report to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

"Our military members and veterans deserve a strong support system," Moran said. "I appreciate the leadership of Senator Dole and Secretary Shalala in putting forth these comprehensive solutions. Congress should now work to modernize the current system to adjust to the realities of today's war and improve the care and treatment of our country's heroes and their families."

"Our nation's men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan deserve our utmost respect for their courage and sacrifice," Dole said. "For those who return from duty injured, we as Americans have an obligation -- a moral duty -- to care for them at the highest level."

H.R. 3502, the Wounded Warriors Commission Implementation Act, would enact the following recommendations of the Commission's report that require congressional action:

- Simplify and update the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability evaluation and payment systems.
- Provide lifetime TRICARE benefits for combat-injured service members.
- Enable all Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who need Post Traumatic Stress Disorder care to receive it from the VA.
- Expand eligibility for TRICARE respite and attendant care to seriously injured service members.
- Cover family members of seriously injured service members under the Family Medical Leave Act for six months.

Additions to the Commission's report are expected from the White House. Congressman John Salazar of Colorado joined Moran in introducing this legislation. Moran and Salazar serve on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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