

To Support an Improved Budget Reform Process for Veteran Affairs

WHEREAS military veterans are true and honored patriots of the freedoms that we all enjoy and deserving of the very best medical and other benefits available for themselves, their families and survivors;

WHEREAS the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is a Presidential Cabinet appointee without the budget development authority as other members of the President's Cabinet and thus unable to advocate for budgetary consideration in a comparative fashion;

WHEREAS the estimated budget shortfall for Veterans in 2009 is 3 billion dollars - a difference between what the President has recommended for the VA and what is actually needed;

WHEREAS ongoing wars increase the demand for mental health care, rehabilitation and nursing home care for veterans;

WHEREAS it is reported that there are currently 870,000 veterans are awaiting decisions from the VA, a process that may take many months or even years; and

WHEREAS the President's budget ranks the VA facilities most in need of construction funds within his budget. However, he fails to fully fund them either thus limiting quality services to veterans in the rural areas of southeastern Washington including Franklin County;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Democrats support Budget Reform that would assure that the Office of Veterans Affairs receive advance and adequate appropriations, approved one year in advance, thereby guaranteeing adequate funding for benefits and programs that is timely and predictable.

Submitted by the Franklin County Democrats to the Washington State Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its June 2, 2012 Convention. (Date Submitted 5/2/2012)

Recommended 'PASS WITH AMENDMENTS' by the Subcommittee on the Foreign Policy, Immigration, the Military, and Tribal Sovereignty and Relations at its May 12th meeting in Ellensburg.

Recommended 'PASS' by the Platform Committee at its June 1st meeting in Seattle.

43 'PASSED' by the Washington State Democratic Convention at its June 2nd meeting in
44 Seattle.