

## Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Council Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings regarding the health, financial, and quality of life issues of veterans.

**WHEREAS**, In 2006, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (“VA”) spent more than \$2.7 billion in Pennsylvania to care for the nearly 1.1 million veterans that live in the Commonwealth and 127,383 Pennsylvania veterans and survivors received disability compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation, or pension payments from the VA; and

**WHEREAS**, In 2006, 156,646 Pennsylvania veterans, aged 65 and older, received medical care at VA facilities and VA regional offices processed 20,334 disability compensation claims, including 6,092 veterans applying for the first time and 14,212 cases where veterans reopened a claim, usually to seek an increase in their disability rating level for higher payments; and

**WHEREAS**, The VA operates eight medical centers in Pennsylvania and 391,396 veterans were enrolled for care and services in 2006, resulting in 20,783 inpatient admissions and 2,323,887 outpatient visits, and 2,946 returning service members received post-conflict care; and

**WHEREAS**, Since October 2001, about 1.6 million U.S. troops have been deployed to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, with many exposed to prolonged periods of combat-related stress and traumatic events and, according to the RAND Corporation, nearly 20 percent, 300,000 in all, report symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder or major depression, yet a little more than half have sought treatment; and

**WHEREAS**, According to the VA, nearly one-quarter of all homeless adults are veterans, and many more veterans who live in poverty are at risk of becoming homeless due to health care and financial issues; and

**WHEREAS**, Considering the current state of the U.S. economy, post traumatic stress and other health issues, and the number of service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, Philadelphia and Pennsylvania face a significant threat of an increase of disabled and homeless veterans; now therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**, That the Committee on Public Health and Human Services is authorized to hold hearings regarding the health, financial, and quality of life issues of veterans.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Committee on Public Health and Human Services invites the Pennsylvania State Senate’s Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee to hold joint hearings concerning this critical and important issue.