



COMMITTEES ON APPROPRIATIONS

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United States Senate

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U.S. House of Representatives

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SUMMARY: FY 2010 MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS BILL

The fiscal year 2010 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations bill provides \$134.6 billion for projects and programs of critical importance to America's veterans and military troops and their families, including veterans benefits and healthcare, and military family housing, barracks and mission critical facilities.

The bill provides \$53 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and \$56.6 billion for mandatory VA programs, \$23.3 billion for military construction and family housing, and \$1.4 billion for military construction projects in support of the war in Afghanistan.

In a major victory for America's veterans, the bill for the first time includes advance appropriations for the VA to ensure a stable and uninterrupted source of funding for medical care for veterans. For fiscal year 2011, the bill includes \$48.2 billion for VA medical programs.

The bill provides funding to address several significant priorities, including:

- Renovating surplus building on VA medical campuses to use as housing for homeless veterans;
- Increasing the number of VA outpatient clinics in rural communities where veterans do not have ready access to VA hospitals;
- Accelerating the Army's program to modernize troop housing for trainees;
- Addressing critical unfunded construction requirements of the Guard and reserve;
- Providing mortgage relief to military families required to relocate during the current mortgage crisis;
- Expediting environmental cleanup on closed military bases; and
- Investing in renewable and alternative energy initiatives on military installations.

Bill Total

2009 Enacted:	\$72.9 billion
President's Request:	\$77.7 billion
House Passed:	\$77.9 billion
Senate Passed:	\$78.1 billion
Final Bill:	\$78.0 billion

KEY INVESTMENTS

Military Construction and Family Housing: \$23.3 billion to support American's military forces and their families at home and overseas, \$333.9 million above the request.

- **Active Components:** \$11.8 billion for such items as barracks, child care centers, installation chapels, and mission critical operational facilities. Includes \$350 million to accelerate the Army's program to modernize troop housing facilities for trainees. The Army has a need for \$2.2 billion to bring all 115,413 trainee barracks spaces up to standard and the program currently is not scheduled to finish until 2017. Also includes \$174 million for the Energy Conservation Investment Program (ECIP), \$84 million above the request, to increase the level of investment in renewable and alternative energy resources and to promote energy conservation, green building initiatives, and energy security programs on U.S. military installations.
- **Guard and reserve:** \$1.6 billion, \$601.7 million above the request, to provide readiness centers and operational facilities for the Army National Guard, Air Guard, and Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force reserve forces. Includes \$200 million in additional construction funding to address critical unfunded requirements.
- **Military Family Housing:** \$2.59 billion for family housing, \$300 million above the request, to further eliminate inadequate military housing, including \$323 million for the Homeowners Assistance Program, \$300 million above the request, to provide additional funding for the expanded mortgage relief program for military families who are required to relocate during the current mortgage crisis and must sell their home at a loss, as well as to wounded warriors who must relocate for medical reasons and to the spouses of fallen warriors similarly affected by the mortgage crisis.
- **Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC):** \$496.8 million for the 1990 BRAC round, \$100 million above the request, to address the large unfunded backlog of environmental cleanup for bases that were closed during the four previous BRAC rounds, and \$7.5 billion for the 2005 BRAC program, the full authorized amount.
- **Overseas Contingency Operations:** \$1.4 billion, matching the request, to support additional military construction requirements to support operations and previously scheduled troop deployments to Afghanistan.

Department of Veterans Affairs: \$109.6 billion, \$15.3 billion above 2009 and \$747 million above the request. The funding includes \$56.6 billion for mandatory veterans benefit programs and \$53 billion for discretionary funding. Total discretionary funding is \$5.4 billion above 2009. In addition, the bill provides \$48.2 billion in advance appropriations for veterans medical care programs for fiscal year 2011.

- **Veterans Health Administration (VHA):** \$45.1 billion, matching the request and \$4.1 billion above 2009, for veterans medical care. The Veterans Health Administration estimates that it will treat more than 6.1 million patients in 2010, including more than 419,000 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan (56,000 more than 2009).
 - **Rural Health:** \$250 million as requested to continue the Rural Health Initiative and an additional \$30 million to increase the number of Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in rural areas for veterans who do not have ready access to VA hospitals. More than 3.2 million (41%) of enrolled veterans live in rural or highly rural areas.

- **Mental Health:** \$4.6 billion, matching the request and \$300 million above 2009, for mental health care to treat the psychological wounds of returning combat veterans, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Includes an additional \$1 million to provide education debt relief as a hiring incentive for mental health professionals.
- **Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Veterans:** \$2.1 billion, matching the request and \$463 million above 2009, to meet the healthcare needs of veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. The VA estimates that the number of OEF/OIF veterans in the VA healthcare system in 2010 will have increased by 61 percent since 2008.
- **Women Veterans Programs:** \$183 million, matching the request, to meet the unique needs of women veterans.
- **Long Term Care:** \$5.9 billion, matching the request, for both institutional and home-based programs for aging veterans as well as severely wounded OEF/OIF veterans.
- **Assistance for Homeless Vets:** \$3.2 billion, matching the request and \$421 million above 2009, for healthcare and support services for homeless veterans; including \$26 million for a Presidential Initiative to combat homelessness, \$150 million for the homeless grants and per diem program, \$20 million for supportive services for low income veterans and families, and \$21 million to hire additional personnel for the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program.
- **Medical and Prosthetic Research:** \$581 million, \$71 million above 2009, for research in a number of areas including mental health, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, burn injury, polytrauma injuries, and sensory loss; including a \$48 million increase for research to address the critical needs of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans
- **Medical Facilities:** \$4.9 billion, \$166 million above the President's Request and \$170 million below 2009. Includes a \$130 million increase for non-recurring maintenance at existing facilities, \$30 million for additional Community Based Outpatient Clinics in rural areas, and \$5 million for additional contracting personnel.
- **VA Construction Programs:** \$1.9 billion, \$103 million above the request and \$232 million above 2009, including:
 - **Major Construction:** \$1.2 billion for VA facilities, including hospitals and clinics, to enable the Department to implement the recommendations made by the Capitol Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission, which was established to look at facilities and determine their construction needs.
 - **Minor Construction:** \$703 million, \$39 million below 2009, \$103 million above the President's budget request, including \$50 million for the renovation of vacant buildings on VA campuses to be used as housing with supportive services for homeless veterans. The VA estimates that on any given night, 131,000 veterans are homeless. This program will strengthen the VA's goal of eliminating homelessness among veterans by providing housing and counseling services in settings that are in close proximity for VA hospitals.
- **State Extended Care Facilities:** \$100 million, \$15 million above the request and \$75 million below 2009, for grants to states for construction and renovation of extended care veterans' facilities. States must provide 35% of the cost, while the Department pays the other 65%.

- **Information Technology:** \$3.3 billion, matching the request, to develop the next generation of electronic healthcare records, paperless claims systems, and seamless integration of medical and service records with the Department of Defense.
- **VA Benefits Claims Processors:** \$1.7 billion, \$223 million above 2009, in general operating expenses to enable the Department to hire roughly 1,200 additional claims processors to continue to address the backlog of benefits claims and to reduce the time to process new claims. The most recent VA quarterly status report estimates that nearly 397,000 claims are pending.
- **Inspector General:** \$109 million, \$2 million above the request and \$21.2 million above 2009, to provide additional oversight personnel for initiatives regarding financial audit and information technology program reviews and to expand oversight of Veterans Benefits Administration regional offices, to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

Related Agencies:

- **American Battle Monuments Commission:** \$62.7 million, \$2.4 million above the request and \$3.2 million above 2009, to provide for the care and operation of military monuments and cemeteries around the world.
- **United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims:** \$27.1 million, matching the request and \$3.9 million below 2009, which included \$7 million in one-time cost for the planning and design of a new facility.
- **Cemeterial Expenses:** \$39.9 million, \$2.7 million above the request and \$3.1 million above 2009, for Arlington National Cemetery. The additional funding will enable relocation of power and telephone lines to make ground available for over 8,000 additional gravesites.
- **Armed Forces Retirement Home:** \$134 million, the same as the President's request and \$71 million above 2009, for the Armed Forces Retirement Home, including \$72 million for capital expenditures.