

By: Senator(s) Hewes, Woodfield, Gollott,
Gordon, Burton, Smith, Frazier, Furniss,
Browning

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 547

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO MEMORIALIZE THE CONGRESS AND THE
2 PRESIDENT TO ENACT LEGISLATION THAT RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE THAT
3 THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT MAINTAIN ITS COMMITMENT TO AMERICA'S
4 MILITARY RETIREES BY PROVIDING LIFETIME HEALTH CARE FOR MILITARY
5 RETIREES OVER THE AGE OF 65 YEARS, LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE OPENING
6 THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM TO ELIGIBLE UNIFORMED
7 SERVICES BENEFICIARIES, AND ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION THAT
8 WOULD ADDRESS THE CONCERNS SET FORTH IN THE MEASURE.

9 WHEREAS, military retirees who have served honorably for 20
10 or more years constitute a significant part of the aging
11 population in the United States; and

12 WHEREAS, these retirees were encouraged to make the United
13 States Armed Forces a career, in part by the promise of lifetime
14 health care for themselves and their families; and

15 WHEREAS, prior to the age of 65 years, these retirees are
16 provided health services by the United States Department of
17 Defense's TRICARE Prime program, but those retirees who reach the
18 age of 65 years lose a significant portion of the promised health
19 care due to medicare eligibility; and

20 WHEREAS, many of these retirees are also unable to access
21 military treatment facilities for health care and life maintenance
22 medications because they live in areas where there are no military
23 treatment facilities, or where these facilities have downsized so
24 significantly that available space for care has become
25 nonexistent; and

26 WHEREAS, the loss of access to health care services provided
27 by the military has resulted in the government breaking its
28 promise of lifetime health care; and

29 WHEREAS, without continued affordable health care, including

30 pharmaceuticals, these retirees have limited access to quality
31 health care, and significantly less care than other retired
32 federal civilians have under the Federal Employees Health Benefits
33 Program (FEHBP); and

34 WHEREAS, it is necessary to enact legislation that would
35 restore health care benefits equitable with those of other retired
36 federal workers; and

37 WHEREAS, several proposals to meet this requirement are
38 currently under consideration before the United States Congress,
39 and the federal Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of
40 Health and Human Services (HHS). Of these proposals, the federal
41 government has already begun to establish demonstration projects
42 around the country to be conducted over the next three years,
43 which would allow Medicare to reimburse DoD for the costs of
44 providing military retirees and their dependents health care.
45 This project would allow a limited number of Medicare-eligible
46 beneficiaries to enroll in DoD's TRICARE Prime program and receive
47 all of their health care under that program:

48 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MISSISSIPPI STATE
49 SENATE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That the
50 Legislature calls upon the United States government to maintain
51 its commitment to America's military retirees by providing
52 lifetime health care for military retirees over the age of 65
53 years.

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Legislature respectfully
55 memorializes the President and Congress of the United States to
56 provide America's military retirees and their families with the
57 health care they were promised, by enacting comprehensive
58 legislation that affords military retirees the ability to access
59 health care either through military treatment facilities or
60 through the military's network of health care providers, as well
61 as legislation to require opening the Federal Employees Health
62 Benefit Program (FEHBP) to those uniformed services beneficiaries

63 who are eligible for Medicare, on the same basis and conditions
64 that apply to retired federal civilian employees.

65 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Legislature respectfully
66 memorializes the President and the Congress of the United States
67 to enact any other appropriate legislation that would address the
68 concerns set forth in this measure.

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate
70 transmit copies of this resolution to the President and
71 Vice-President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of
72 Representatives, the Chairpersons of the House and Senate
73 Committees on Aging, and to each Senator and Representative from
74 Mississippi in the Congress of the United States.