



Monroe County Legislature

TED O'BRIEN
LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 17

TED O'BRIEN
LEGISLATOR-DISTRICT 17
120 THURLOW AVENUE
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14609
OFFICE (585) 753-1940
HOME (585) 654-9397
E-MAIL eobrien@harrishesworth.com

February 12, 2007

To The Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

**Subject: Memorializing the Federal Government to Enact Legislation to Require
Mandatory Funding for Veterans' Healthcare**

Honorable Legislators:

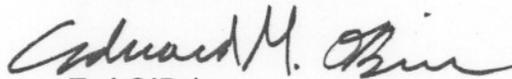
Men and women serving in the U.S. military commit great sacrifices to protect our freedoms. In 2001, President George W. Bush created the Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery to our Nation's Veterans, charging it with identifying ways to better guarantee healthcare services to our veterans; services they courageously earn. Currently, the Federal budget identifies funding for our veteran's healthcare as a discretionary program. In their final report in 2003, the Task Force identified a disturbing trend, whereby funding requests from the Department of Veterans Affairs were not met in the Federal Budget. Part of their findings included the need for the establishment of a mandatory funding mechanism to ensure all enrolled veterans would be provided healthcare benefits.

After four years, the Administration continues to ignore calls by members of Congress, veterans' agencies, advocacy groups, and the President's own Task Force to provide assured funding for our veterans' healthcare. The increasing costs of healthcare combined with an increasing number of our service men and women returning from overseas make it critical that our nation be able to provide these basic services to our veterans.

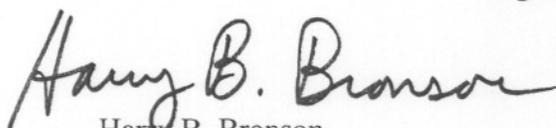
As it stands, healthcare funding must face the annual uncertainties of budget cycles, preventing the VA from establishing a comprehensive plan that protects all veterans' rights to quality healthcare, a promise this nation should make as a humble acknowledgement for their service and bravery. According to the DAV, Disabled American Veterans, the estimated cut to the VA budget in fiscal year 2006 was over \$900 million, 3.1 percent.

In his State of the Union delivered on January 23, 2007, President George W. Bush asked Congress to authorize an increase in the size of the active Army and Marine Corps by 92,000 troops over the next five years. Now more than ever, the federal government should take steps necessary to ensure healthcare access for our current and future veterans. Therefore, we ask you to join us in imploring the U.S. Congress, U.S. Senate, and President of the United States to require that funding for veteran's healthcare be a mandatory obligation of the Federal budget.

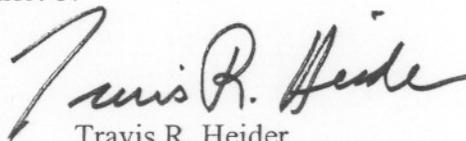
Respectfully submitted,



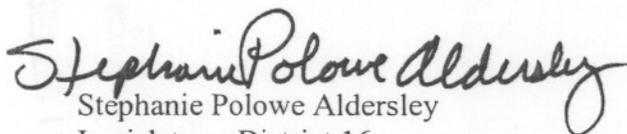
Ted O'Brien
Legislator - District 17



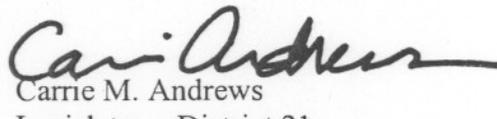
Harry B. Bronson
Assistant Democratic Leader



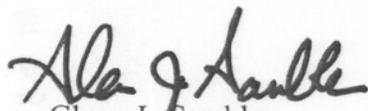
Travis R. Heider
Legislator - District 14



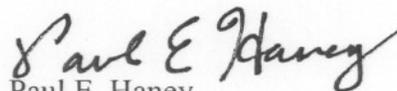
Stephanie Polowe Aldersley
Legislator - District 16



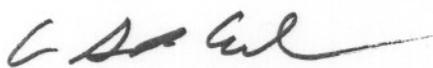
Carrie M. Andrews
Legislator - District 21



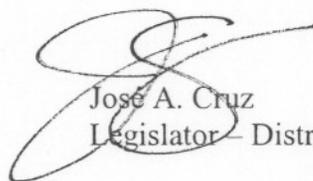
Glenn J. Gamble
Legislator - District 22



Paul E. Haney
Legislator - District 23



C. Stephen Eckel
Legislator - District 26



Jose A. Cruz
Legislator - District 29