



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1027-2003, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1027

Resolution calling on the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs not to eliminate or reduce acute psychiatric, neurological or rehabilitative medical services at the New York Campus of the VA NY Harbor Healthcare System, and to provide the public with full and accessible opportunities to express its views regarding the Draft National Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Plan.

By Council Members López, Addabbo, Barron, Comrie, Fidler, Foster, Gennaro, Gentile, Gerson, Gioia, Jackson, Martinez, Nelson, Perkins, Quinn, Sanders, Seabrook, Stewart, Sears, Brewer, Moskowitz, Jennings, Reyna, Vann, Weprin, Gonzalez and The Public Advocate (Ms.Gotbaum)

Whereas, The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Administration, through the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) process, and as set forth in the Draft National Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Plan (the "CARES Plan") issued on August 20, 2003, has proposed eliminating certain inpatient services at the New York Campus of the VA NY Harbor Healthcare System (the "Manhattan VA Medical Center"), including psychiatric, neurological and physical rehabilitation medical services; and
Whereas, Under the CARES Plan, the Manhattan VA Medical Center's 378 inpatient beds, which include psychiatric, neurological and physical rehabilitation beds, would be transferred to the Brooklyn Campus of the VA NY Harbor Healthcare System, located in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn; and
Whereas, According to the minutes and findings of a July 22-24, 2003 CARES Veterans Integrated Service Network 3 Site Visit of various facilities, including the Manhattan VA Medical Center, "...due to the complexity of travel within the New York Metropolitan Area, eliminating inpatient care at this site may have a significant impact on the veteran population in this network"; and
Whereas, Veterans unable to travel to Brooklyn for services either may forgo treatment, or instead seek treatment from already strained, but more physically accessible, City funded medical facilities located in Manhattan; and
Whereas, The CARES process does not provide for full public input, since the only hearing hosted by the CARES Commission in New York City in 2003 will be taking place at the Bronx VA Medical Center, and public testimony will not be permitted at such hearing; and
Whereas, The only mechanism through which the CARES Commission has provided for public input and expressions of concern is through the submission of written comments to the CARES Commission; and
Whereas, According to the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs, there are approximately 322,000 veterans living in New York City; and
Whereas, According to the Washington Post, the number of troops wounded in action in Iraq is now more than twice the number of troops wounded in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and the number of troops injured since May 1, 2003, when the United States declared that major combat operations were over in Iraq, has increased more than 35%, as of August 2003; and
Whereas, It is critical that we support our troops in times of peace as well as during times of conflict; and
Whereas, Particularly given current United States military involvement in Iraq and elsewhere in the world, it is especially important that we provide veterans with necessary services upon their return from service; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs to not eliminate or reduce acute psychiatric, neurological or rehabilitative medical services at the New York Campus of the VA NY Harbor Healthcare System, and to provide the public with full and accessible opportunities to express its views regarding the Draft National Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Plan.

LCG/MDP
LS No. 3031
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