

**WASHINGTON, DC** - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) applauded passage of a number of bills this week that strengthen the nation's commitment to its veterans, military personnel and their families.

The first veterans' measure that passed in the last week - the **TRICARE Affirmation Act (HR 4887)** - made unequivocally clear that TRICARE and nonappropriated fund (NAF) health plans meet all of the health care requirements for individual health insurance under the new health reform law. Passage of this bill was also accompanied by statements from [Defense Secretary Robert Gates](#) and the [Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki](#) affirming the preservation of these critical programs. Read the supporting statements from [AMVETS](#) and [Vietnam Veterans of Americans](#).

"This resolution is an affirmation of Congressional intent to see that Service Members dependents, and our Veterans will continue to receive the health services that they have earned through their service to our Country," **stated Congressman Hoyer**. "Congress remains committed to ensuring that the brave men and women of our armed services receive the best support possible, and committed to keep our promise to our veterans."

The House also passed a number of veterans' bills today, including legislation to arm the VA with better tools to fight and end homelessness, increase on-the-job training opportunities for returning veterans, prevent mortgage lenders from foreclosing on a veteran's home after their service, and make sure payments for disabled veterans keep pace with the cost of living.

- **End Veteran Homelessness Act of 2010** (H.R. 4810) - Strengthens successful comprehensive programs for homeless veterans through investments, requires housing counselors to generate more veterans housing opportunities at each VA medical center with housing services, strengthens permanent housing programs, and pays special attention to the needs of homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children.

- **National Guard Employment Protection Act of 2010** (H.R. 1879) - Extends key reemployment rights to all of those called up for full-time National Guard duty, including those assigned to a homeland security mission.

- **Helping Heroes Keep Their Homes Act of 2010** (H.R. 3976) -- Extends expiring protections that safeguard veteran homeowners from foreclosure immediately following

deployment.

- **Energy Jobs for Veterans Act** (H.R. 4592) -- Increases job opportunities for veterans by reimbursing employers for the cost of providing on-the-job training for veterans in the energy sector through a new "Veterans Energy Related Employment Program" of competitive grants.

- **Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2010** (H.R. 4667) Increases the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, effective December 1, 2010.

"In these challenging economic times, with returning veterans experiencing unemployment rates in the double digits, we must do more to provide for our veterans' basic needs," **stated Hoyer.**

"This legislation shows that the U.S. is grateful for our veterans' service."

These bills build on a significant record of accomplishment for veterans and troops over the last three years under the New Direction Congress - including the New GI Bill to ensure our returning veterans part of our economic recovery, historic investments to strengthen quality veterans' health care and improve care for those with PTSD.

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