

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) visited the Greenbelt Veterans Community Clinic on Wednesday, April 11, to tour the facility and talk to caregivers about patient services. The small outpatient clinic, which serves approximately 2,000 veterans per year, provides basic medical and preventive care as well as health education to veterans living in Northern Prince George's County.

"While small, the Greenbelt Veterans Community Clinic is a critical outpost for veterans' health care in our community, delivering very personalized services to veterans here in Prince George's County," stated Rep. Hoyer.

Following the tour and meeting, Hoyer spoke about what the 110th Congress has done to address the needs of veterans nationwide. Since the start of the 110th Congress, the House has passed a number of measures to invest more in veterans' health care and ensure the best quality services at veterans' facilities and military hospitals across the country.

Among legislation passed:

- 2008 Budget Resolution: Increases investment in VA health care by \$6.6 billion over 2007 figures. The increased funding is \$3.5 billion over the Administration's request.
- U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act: Provides \$1.7 billion above the President's request for initiatives to address the health care needs of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and the backlog in maintaining VA health care facilities. Also includes \$100 million for mental health treatment.
- Wounded Warriors Assistance Act of 2007: Addresses the problems facing wounded service members and to improve their transition from the military to the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention: Directs the Secretary of the VA to develop and implement a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans.

- Dr. James Allen Veteran Equity Act: Improves compensation benefits for veterans in certain cases of impairment of vision involving both eyes.
- Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment: Increases the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities.

“Our promise to our nation's veterans requires us to ensure that our country fulfills its responsibility to those Americans who have answered our Nation's highest calling,” stated Hoyer. “As more servicemen and women return from tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, the need for veterans’ services is only expected to increase. When they return, they deserve nothing less than a hero’s welcome that includes the best health care and medical treatment available.”

While at the clinic, Hoyer also spoke about the action the House took to address the serious problems wounded service members experienced at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and other military and veterans' hospitals. In order to make immediate redress of the problems at Walter Reed and other VA facilities, the House included an additional \$3.5 million above the President's budget request. The House also passed the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act, which aims to prevent similar situations to Walter Reed from striking the VA system.

“The events and conditions reported at Walter Reed amounted to a breach of faith with our soldiers,” said Hoyer. “America's fighting men and women, whether they are deployed in the field or recovering from injuries here at home, should always be able to count on the full support of their government. They have fulfilled their duties bravely and honorably - and they deserve nothing less than treatment and care that is commensurate with the heroic deeds they undertake.”

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