

5th District Legislative Report

February 21, 2010

The 5th District is comprised of over 3,200 Legion members and they are represented by 2 U.S. Senators, 6 U.S. Representatives, 5 State Senators, and 16 State Representatives.

At the Federal level, there is a combination of 678 (up from 672) Bills and Resolutions being considered by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives that are related to veteran affairs & rehabilitation, foreign relations, economic, Americanism, internal affairs, children & youth, and national security issues. The American Legion is actively supporting 187 (down from 222) of these and there are two that The American Legion is NOT supporting. Refer to the attached sheets for specific information about each Federal Bill or Resolution not covered herein.

At the State level, the State Legislature is not in session.

Key Federal Legislation Passed:

On November 11, 2009, Bill S.509 became law. The Bill authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to carry out a major medical facility project at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Walla Walla, Washington and authorizes appropriations for the project.

On December 14, 2009, Bill S.1599 (Reserve Officers Association Modernization Act of 2009) became law. The Bill revises the federal charter of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States to include the president elect of the Association on the national executive committee as a non-voting member. It also specifies that there shall be a minimum of three national executive committee members on the Association's national executive committee.

On December 19, 2009, Bill H.R.3326 (Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2010) became law. Appropriates funds for FY2010 for active-duty and reserve personnel in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force (the military departments), and for National Guard personnel in the Army and Air Force. It also appropriates funds for FY2010 for operation and maintenance (O&M) for the military departments, the defense agencies, the reserve components, and the Army and Air National Guard and all the other agencies within the Department of Defense.

On February 1, 2010, Bill H.R. 1377 became law. Revises provisions concerning the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reimburse a veteran for the cost of emergency care provided in a non-Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility to provide that, if the veteran has contractual or legal recourse against a third party that would, in part, extinguish the veteran's liability to the provider of the emergency treatment and payment for the treatment may be made by both the VA and the third party, the amount payable by the VA shall be that which exceeds the cost payable by the third party. It also prohibits the Secretary from reimbursing a veteran for any copayment or other charge owed to a third party under a health plan contract. Authorizes the Secretary to reimburse a veteran for the cost of the emergency care described above which is

provided before the enactment of this Act, if the Secretary determines that it is appropriate under the circumstances.

Key State Legislation Passed:

The State Legislature was not in session.

Gary M. Smith
5th District Legislative Representative