

Senators Kahn, Allen, Richardville, Birkholz, Garcia, Pappageorge, Hardiman, Jelinek, Gilbert, Van Woerkom, Patterson, Cropsey, McManus, Cassis, Kuipers, Jansen, Olshove, Jacobs, Stamas, Brown, Cherry, Barcia, Switalski, Gleason, Whitmer, Sanborn and Bishop offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 106.

A resolution to urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to base their decisions for VA outpatient clinic staffing levels and funding on the size of the local veteran population.

Whereas, The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) operates one of the largest health care systems in the country. This service is a vitally needed component of our nation's commitment to aiding wounded and sick veterans. In fiscal year 2007, the VA anticipates providing health care to five million veterans. The size of this system places health care facilities within reach of veterans whether they are in urban or rural areas. For veterans coping with conditions and injuries resulting from their service to our nation, ease of access is crucial; and

Whereas, Michigan has sixteen VA outpatient clinics to serve our state's veterans, in addition to other types of facilities. The geographic dispersal of these health facilities is important to reaching all of our veterans. The siting of buildings, however, is only part of the solution to providing adequate care. While facilities may last decades, population shifts that take place over years can result in some clinics being overburdened while others develop excess capacity. Staffing and overall funding levels adjusted to account for changing veteran residency would make the most of our system of veterans care; and

Whereas, The VA's strategic planning efforts to manage their system of health care facilities must account for trends in population shifts on an ongoing basis. While determining where facilities should be located is an important consideration for long-term planning, in the short run the VA system must be nimble enough to adjust funding and staff levels in existing outpatient clinics. This adaptability carried out on a continuous basis will help keep resources and needs synchronized to promote efficiency and maximize our medical care for our nation's veterans; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to base their decisions for VA outpatient clinic staffing levels and funding on the size of the local veteran population; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.