

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

BY SENATORS LUNEAU, ABRAHAM, BERNARD, BOUIE, CARTER, CATHEY, CLOUD, CORTEZ, FESI, FIELDS, HENRY, MCMATH, FRED MILLS, MORRIS, PEACOCK, PRICE, REESE, STINE AND TALBOT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to reconsider the closure of the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

WHEREAS, in his second inaugural address, President Abraham Lincoln promised "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan"; and

WHEREAS, President Lincoln affirmed the government's obligation to care for those injured during the war, and to provide for the families of those who perished on the battlefield; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) carries out specific missions to honor President Lincoln's commitment to America's veterans by providing healthcare and educational benefits, home loans, and dignified burial services; and

WHEREAS, the vision of the VA is to provide veterans the benefits and services they have earned by adhering to the highest standards of compassion, commitment, excellence, professionalism, integrity, accountability, and stewardship; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center (the Center) is a teaching hospital in Pineville, Louisiana, that provides a full range of services, with state-of-the-art technology as well as education and research; and

WHEREAS, the Center serves a potential population of more than one hundred thousand veterans and an active patient roster of more than thirty-seven thousand; and

WHEREAS, the VA recommends closing the Center and more than fifteen other sites where the number of veterans, and the overall population, has declined in recent decades; and

WHEREAS, services at the closed sites would be replaced by smaller inpatient and outpatient clinics to be built in those areas or by construction of new VA medical centers in nearby communities; and

WHEREAS, the Center provides outstanding health care, trains America's future health care providers, and conducts important medical research; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's congressional leadership has remarked that the Center is critical for veterans across the state and the detrimental effects of its closure would be immeasurable.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to reconsider the closure of the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES