

December 14, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The American Legion is closely monitoring the legislative activities on Capitol Hill as Congress is addressing VA funding for FY 2008. Earlier this year, both the House and the Senate agreed to fund VA at the levels recommended by The American Legion and other major VSOs.

The entire veterans' community and the vast majority of lawmakers fully support this level of funding because it meets the increased demands placed on VA due to the global war on terrorism. This proposed funding will allow VA to hire additional PTSD counselors, hire additional VA claims adjudicators, continue pending CARES construction projects, and meet the growing demands for timely access to quality health care due primarily to the returning servicemembers from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom who are seeking earned treatment and services.

Mr. President, The American Legion understands that the VA budget does not exist in a vacuum, but is only one element of a Federal budget that funds other domestic programs. We adamantly believe that funding for VA, defense, and homeland security are directly related to the on-going cost of war and may fluctuate based on changing paradigms, such as the recent surge in Iraq, which The American Legion fully supported.

Therefore, The American Legion respectfully request that you reconsider your funding proposal for VA in your initial budget recommendation and allow Congress the \$3.7 billion margin without offsets in other domestic accounts.

Mr. President, we are a nation at war, and The American Legion firmly believes that this additional funding is necessary to properly care for our returning warriors.

Sincerely,

MARTIN CONATSER  
National Commander

<<Commander's Ltr to President 12-14-07.doc>>