

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 12, 2007

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

We the undersigned, representing tens of thousands of veterans in Colorado, ask that the Senate act promptly to pass legislation, already passed by the House, that would increase funding for veterans' programs, improve the health care provided to veterans, and expand business opportunities for veterans. Our many veterans deserve no less.

Our military members and veterans are a valued constituency in the State of Colorado. We have multiple military installations throughout the state, including the United States Air Force Academy, Peterson Air Force Base, and Fort Carson. There are over 440,000 veterans in Colorado, approximately 14 percent of our population. This exceeds the national average. These veterans, like those throughout the nation, have put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms. They deserve to be treated with the honor and respect they have rightfully earned.

We are proud of the record the House has amassed in support of veterans. We included almost \$88 billion for veterans in the House-passed veterans' appropriations bill, billions more than in the prior fiscal year or requested by President George W. Bush. Of this amount, over \$37 billion was for veterans' health programs alone.

The House has also passed more than 15 other bills to help or honor our veterans that the Senate has not taken up. These include measures to improve veterans' health care and help veteran-owned small businesses. One measure in particular, H.R. 1660, is of great importance to the veterans of Colorado. This bill would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a badly needed national veterans' cemetery in southern Colorado.

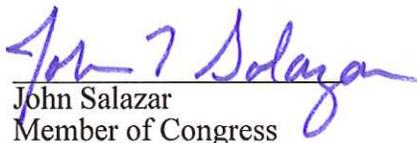
We are confident that you share our commitment to honor our nation's veterans. We respectfully request that you demonstrate this commitment by bringing to the Senate floor these House-passed bills. Passing them in the Senate will enable them to be sent to President Bush for his signature and thus provide help to veterans in Colorado and throughout the nation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



John Salazar
Member of Congress



Mark Udall
Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress