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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Legion thanks Bachmann for withdrawing VA-cuts proposal

WASHINGTON (Feb. 10, 2011) – The American Legion is expressing its thanks to Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., for withdrawing her proposal to cut \$4.5 billion in VA spending and veterans health benefits. Her decision came one week after the Legion and other veterans service organizations protested the recommendation.

Bachmann told The American Legion she heard from many of its members after she proposed the VA cuts last month. “Their comments played a key role in my decision to remove that (\$4.5 billion) item from the discussion, and I’m grateful for their input.”

“Rep. Bachmann has done what our elected representatives should do in situations like this,” American Legion National Commander Jimmie Foster said. “She listened to her constituents, to veterans, and acted according to their interests.

“We know this is a tough time and that difficult budget decisions are coming, but we’ve all worked too hard to establish an excellent VA health-care system to let it slide now,” he said.

The \$4.5 billion in VA budget cuts were part of a proposal (derived from a Heritage Foundation report) to reduce federal spending by \$400 billion. The report projected \$2.5 billion in savings from a freeze on VA health-care spending and another \$1.9 billion saved by eliminating disability payments for veterans who receive SSDI (Social Security Disability Income).

“Government spending is a serious issue that demands hard work and tough decisions from members of Congress,” Bachmann told the Legion. “We do need to make serious cuts in spending, but not at the expense of our nation’s heroes.”

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