

**From:** March, Joseph H.

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**Subject:** News Release: The American Legion: "We are 100 percent committed to ensuring that veterans and their families are protected"

Attachments:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **The American Legion: “We are 100 percent committed to ensuring that veterans and their families are protected”**

WASHINGTON (March 22, 2010) -- “I have been assured personally by the President, Secretary of Defense, VA Secretary, Speaker of the House, Majority Leaders, and numerous other Senators and Representatives - as has National Commander David Rehbein before me - that nothing in the national health care reform legislation will change current DoD and VA health care eligibility or practices,” said The American Legion National Commander Clarence E. Hill concerning the outcome of the health care vote on Sunday.

“As late as 9 pm last evening, I was on the telephone with House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and we spoke candidly about The American Legion’s concerns. Based on that conversation, the transcripts of hearings, assurances from the President and Secretary themselves, I am 100 percent confident that Congress will act responsibly as regards the nation’s veterans and their families,” Hill said.

Hill also explained that the legislative process being employed to implement the current health care reform is unlike any he has seen in his lifetime. Indeed, there has been nothing similar in the past 100 years. However, said Hill, “this is not the end of the health care reform debate or legislative process. The legislation involved is so complex that it will take years to iron out and implement. The American Legion will be involved every step of the way to ensure that the health care options guaranteed to service members and veterans, and their families, will be protected.”

While the entire health care reform legislative package is extremely controversial and contentious, The American Legion has taken a position on one aspect only: maintaining the autonomy of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Defense’s health care delivery systems.

“It is going to be a long, drawn out legislative process, but America’s veterans can rest assured that their benefits will be protected. That I personally guarantee,” said Hill.

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