

From: [March, Joseph H.](#)
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Legion thanks Congress for swift response

*National commander urges caution about use of non-VA health-care providers
beyond the delayed appointment crisis.*

WASHINGTON (June 12, 2014) --American Legion National Commander Daniel M. Dellinger today praised Congress for quick action this week to help veterans see physicians in a timely manner. The House and Senate both passed bills that will allow Department of Veterans Affairs patients who have been waiting unreasonable amounts of time for appointments to see non-VA providers.

The leader of the nation's largest veterans service organization added that such an emergency measure must only be a stop-gap remedy while the VA health-care system is realigned to better meet patient demand. The legislation came after independent reports showed that more than 57,000 veterans were waiting 90 days or more for VA appointments and another estimated 60,000 were denied appointments after requesting them.

"Congress has put politics aside and overwhelmingly passed bipartisan bills in both houses that begin the long journey toward restoring VA," Dellinger said. "The American Legion applauds the swift response. However, vouchering care to non-VA providers must only be a bridge to a new system, a system we know is worth saving. These bills are positive steps to begin restoring trust, foremost to veterans, but also to the American public."

The American Legion is now scheduling town hall meetings in the most affected areas of the country to better assess the problem in order to help develop solutions.

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Contact: Marty Callaghan:202-263-5758/202-341-8900, mcallaghan@legion.org. A high resolution photo of Nat. Cmdr. Dellinger is available at www.legion.org.