

# Resolutions Calling for Military Commissions for DCs Introduced in Both House and Senate

"Sense of Congress" legislation calling on the US Secretary of Defense to immediately take steps to commission doctors of chiropractic as health care officers in the US Armed Forces have been in the US House of Representatives as well as the US Senate.

At the request of the ICA, on February 13, 2008, Representative Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), joined by The Hon. Thelma Drake (R-VA) and two other members, The Hon. Ron Paul (R-TX) and The Hon. Robert Brady (D-PA), introduced Congressional Joint Resolution 294 which states:

*...it is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should take immediate steps to establish a career path for doctors of chiropractic to be appointed as commissioned officers in all branches of the Armed Forces for purposes of providing chiropractic services to members of the Armed Forces.*

## Senate Resolution

On April 10, Senator Norm Coleman of Minnesota and Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa, introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 75 complementing House Resolution 294 and calling for the same executive department action. The Senate Resolution states:

*....it is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should take immediate steps to establish a career path for doctors of chiropractic to be appointed as commissioned officers in all branches of the Armed Forces for purposes of providing chiropractic services to members of the Armed Forces.*

"We are deeply grateful to Rep. Abercrombie, Rep. Drake for introducing this important call to action on behalf of our profession in the House, and Senators Coleman and Harkin for doing the same in the Senate," said Michael McLean, DC, Co-Chair of ICA's Legislative Committee.

## Legislative priority

Military commissioning for doctors of chiropractic has been a longstanding goal of the ICA because ICA believes that commissions are the only way to guarantee universal access to chiropractic services for all military personnel, and to provide for permanence for a chiropractic services program. The first legislation calling for military commissions for DCs was introduced in the US House of Representatives in 1936 by a Member from Kentucky at the request of ICA Founder President Dr. B.J. Palmer.

Statutory authority has been on the federal statute books for nearly 15 years for the Secretary of Defense to commission DCs, but it has never been acted upon. In order to provide for significantly improved quality of care, to enhance operational efficiency and to address the spinal health needs of all military personnel, passage of House Res. 294 and Senate Res. 75 is essential and is a top legislative priority of the ICA.

The military commissioning of doctors

of chiropractic will:

- Expand the availability of chiropractic services to all realms of military operations and activities, thus providing urgently needed care to active duty personnel even in the most difficult settings.
- Increase the cost effectiveness of military health care expenditures by making optimal use of the conservative, drugless and non-surgical care pathway chiropractic offers.
- Enhance the combat readiness of skilled personnel by offering a non-pharmaceutical option to care for their health needs.
- Help in meeting the growing demand for chiropractic care in the military.



ICA Legislative Committee Co-Chair Dr. Michael McLean (right) and ICA Representative from Hawaii, Dr. Nicholas Opie (left), honor Rep. Neil Abercrombie (D-HI) for his outstanding legislative record on behalf of the chiropractic profession and his commitment to quality health care for all citizens.

- Utilize a highly skilled and trained pool of health care professionals.

"We would like to express our special thanks to Dr. Nicholas Opie, ICA Assembly Representative from Hawaii, for his

tireless efforts to secure the introduction of House Resolution 294 by his Member of Congress," said Dr. McLean. "This important accomplishment is dramatic evidence of how one determined individual can make a difference for chiropractic."

ICA urges every doctor of chiropractic, student, family member or interested citizen to contact their Senator or Member of the US House of Representatives and ask for their immediate co-sponsorship of these two resolutions. You can locate your Senator or Representative via the Internet <http://www.senative.gov/> and <http://www.house.gov/>.



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