

U.S. House Passes Bill for Employment of DCs by Dept. of Veterans Affairs

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed legislation that would authorize the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to employ doctors of chiropractic as career professionals. H.R. 2357, a bill to, "To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the appointment of chiropractors in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs," passed the House on July 22nd. Under present law the DVA only has authority to employ DCs on a temporary basis.

Members of the DVA Chiropractic Advisory Committee, as well as the ICA and other major chiropractic organizations have been working for a long time for a clear legislative mandate to employ DCs as career professionals.

The Congressional Budget Office's analysis states:

"Under current law, VA is required to make chiropractic care available to veterans in at least one site in each of VA's 21 geographic service areas. Section 1 would make it easier for VA to appoint and hire chiropractors by specifying that they be treated as other medical professionals like podiatrists and optometrists. Based on information from VA, CBO does not expect that implementing this provision would increase the level of spending for chiropractic care that VA would provide beyond what VA is already required to provide under the current law. Thus, the primary effect would be to facilitate the establishment of chiropractic care that VA is already undertaking."

H.R. 2357 also would make it easier for VA to hire chiropractors by specifically listing chiropractors as medical professionals that VA could hire. In addition, the bill would grant VA the authority to treat chiropractors like other medical professionals with regard to malpractice and negligence, reimbursement of certain education expenses, and collective bargaining."

"The federal government is the largest employer in the United States and the DVA is the largest employer of health professionals in the U.S.," said ICA's Chief Legislative Strategist, former Congressman Randy Tate. "Your tax dollars are paying these bills and it is clearly in chiropractic's interest to open federal career pathways for doctors of chiropractic."

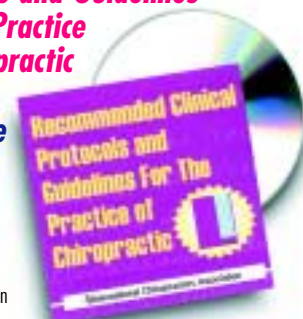
ICA is now working to support this initiative in the U.S. Senate and encourages chiropractors to mobilize so that this vital new provision is enacted. The full text of H.R. 2357 is available on ICA's website at www.chiropractic.org.

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