



February 4, 2010

Veteran Bill Would Authorize \$50,000,000 in Funding Over the Next Five Years

The information below is a press release provided by Senator Murray's office.

Last Thursday, U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), a senior member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, announced that her legislation that focuses specifically on helping homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children has passed through the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee by voice vote.

Murray's bill, the Homeless Women Veterans and Homeless Veterans with Children Act of 2009, will extend federal grant programs to help local organizations provide services including transitional housing, job training, counseling, and child care to the children of homeless veterans. Statistics show that the numbers of homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children are on the rise.

"Today's passage of the bill through the VA committee is an important step forward toward providing support for a unique and growing group of homeless veterans," said Senator Patty Murray. "Women veterans and veterans with children often have different needs and require specialized services. The grants included in this bill will go to help provide transitional housing as well as services like parenting classes, domestic violence prevention, job training, and child care. It's our duty to give every veteran the resources they need to come in off the streets. This bill will help provide an open door to women and families that have made tremendous sacrifices and deserve safe and stable homes."

The bill, S.1237, will now head to the full Senate for consideration.

Murray introduced this bill with Senators Johnson and Reed in June of 2009. Murray urged her colleagues to support the bill at a committee hearing on October 21, 2009.

Veterans officials estimate that the demand for transitional housing and services for women veterans and veterans with children will grow due to troops returning



home and the economic recession. Currently, in many parts of Washington state transitional housing units for families are filled as quickly as they become available.

Senator Murray's bill would authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs' Grant Per Diem Program to make Special Needs Grants to facilities at the VA and elsewhere to provide services and care for male veterans that are homeless with their children and to the children of all homeless veterans. Under current law, those groups are not covered by the Grant and Per Diem program's Special Needs Grants.

Her bill would also extend the Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) to provide workforce training, job counseling, child care services and placement services including literacy and skills training to homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children.

Senator Murray's bill would authorize \$50,000,000 in funding over the next five years.