

Amendment to the Chairman’s Mark

Offered by Representatives Moulton, Van Hollen, McDermott, Lee, Pocan, Dingell, and Lieu

**Fully Fund VA Programs and Protect them from Future Government Shutdowns**

1. Increase discretionary budget authority and outlays for Function 700 by the following amounts in billions of dollars to fund veterans’ programs at the President’s requested levels for 2016 and 2017.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
BA	1.856	4.434	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Outlays	0.933	2.756	1.465	0.561	0.243	0.197	-	-	-	-

2. Adjust the aggregate levels of revenue by amounts equal to the foregoing outlay changes in paragraph 1, reflecting the reduction of tax expenditures for the top one percent of income earners, or of unjustified corporate tax breaks, including tax subsidies for the major integrated oil companies, special depreciation for corporate jets, loopholes that encourage firms to ship jobs and capital overseas and shelter their profits in foreign tax havens, the “carried interest” loophole that allows hedge fund managers to disguise their compensation as capital gains, or corporate deductions for CEO bonuses and other excessive executive compensation exceeding \$1 million per year.
3. Delete Sec. (405) (c)(2) and replace with the following to ensure that appropriations for all Department of Veterans Affairs activities are provided through advance appropriations:

“(2) \$74,775,000,000 for all discretionary funded activities at the Department of Veterans Affairs.”

4. Amend the committee report to reflect the following policy assumptions:

The resolution matches the President’s requested funding levels for veterans’ discretionary programs for 2016 and 2017 to ensure veterans receive the benefits they have earned in a timely fashion. Providing access to quality health care and veterans’ benefits has been an ongoing challenge for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA),

highlighted most recently by the revelation that thousands of veterans were waiting months for health care appointments. Providing funding at the President's requested levels is vital to ensuring that the VA makes progress in redressing these problems.

The resolution also makes all discretionary programs at the VA subject to advance appropriations, which will ensure funding is in place for all of VA's programs at the beginning of each fiscal year. As part of extending advance appropriations to all of VA's discretionary budget, it is the policy of the resolution that VA submit along with its annual budget a "Future Years Veterans Program" that projects its needs over five years to help facilitate the appropriations and oversight processes.

Currently, only VA's medical programs – approximately 85 percent of VA's budget – is provided a year in advance through advance appropriations. The resolution makes eligible for advance appropriations the remaining 15 percent, which includes funding for the day-to-day operations at the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The government shutdown in 2013 led to furloughs at the VBA, which resulted in further delays in the processing of claims for benefits. Extending advance appropriations to all of VA's discretionary activities will prevent such delays and help ensure those who have served the nation receive prompt access to the federal benefits and services that they have earned.

The resolution accommodates the necessary funding for veterans programs by reducing or eliminating some of the following: tax expenditures for the top one percent of income earners; or unjustified corporate tax breaks, including tax subsidies for the major integrated oil companies, special depreciation for corporate jets, loopholes that encourage firms to ship jobs and capital overseas and shelter their profits in foreign tax havens, the "carried interest" loophole that allows hedge fund managers to disguise their compensation as capital gains, or corporate deductions for CEO bonuses and other excessive executive compensation exceeding \$1 million per year.