

DRAFT RESOLUTION 20-03

SUBJECT: Increase Veterans Burial Benefits

SOURCE: OH, AK, IN, IL, MO, ND, CT, WI, DC, PA, NC, WA, MA, MI

WHEREAS, the VA pays a higher level of burial benefits upon the death of a veteran who dies from a service-connected illness or disability and lesser burial benefits upon the death of a wartime veteran who dies from a non-service-connected illness or disability; and

WHEREAS, the current VA burial expense payment for a service-related death is up to \$2,000 for those occurring after September 11, 2001, or up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to September 11, 2001. For non-service related deaths VA will pay up to \$749 toward burial and funeral expenses for deaths on or after October 1, 2016 if hospitalized by VA at time of death, or \$300 if not hospitalized by VA at time of death. Due to the dramatic increase in private sector funeral expenses, this benefit has been seriously eroded over the years; and

WHEREAS, while these benefits were never intended to cover the full costs of burial, they now pay for only a small fraction of what they covered in 1973 when the federal government first started paying burial benefits; and

WHEREAS, the VA should provide the resources needed to meet increasing private-sector costs of burial; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS believes there is still a serious deficit between the original value of the plot allowance benefit and its current value. Congress should increase the plot allowance for all eligible veterans and expand the eligibility for the plot allowance for all veterans who might be eligible for burial in a national cemetery, not just those who served during wartime; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS urges Congress and the Administration to provide the resources required to meet the critical and sensitive nature of the National Cemetery Administration's mission thereby fulfilling the nation's commitment to all veterans who have served their country so honorably and faithfully.

Committee Recommendations:

VAVS & VA Hospital and Medical Services, Rehabilitation Benefits Committee: Adopt

Floor Action: ADOPTED