RESOLUTION 12-04

SUBJECT: Service for Rural and Remote Veteran Populations

WHEREAS, 45 percent of U.S. military recruits hail from rural America, and more than three million (or nearly half) of veterans enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare system live in rural or remote areas; and

WHEREAS, When service members return from combat and transition back into civilian life, they are often returning to parts of the nation where they do not always have immediate access to VA care and services; and

WHEREAS, Many veterans living in rural areas choose not to seek assistance or care from VA because they either have no means of transportation or simply do not have the time or means to travel far distances to their nearest VA Medical Center (VAMC) or Community-based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC); and

WHEREAS, Another hurdle to care for this population of veterans is the fact that many of the specialists they need to see for care are only available on certain days and most do not have provide care after 5 p.m. or on weekends, making it nearly impossible for veterans with jobs to make appointments: now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, AMVETS calls upon VA to develop and implement stronger programs for our rural veteran population, today’s combat veterans returning to their rural homes in need of specialized care due to war injuries, both physical and psychological, must have equal access to VA care and services; and be it further

RESOLVED, AMVETS urges VA to develop new programs and locations so that every veteran may have access to the services and care by VA, regardless of where they reside in this great nation.