



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 19-3108, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

URGING THE ILLINOIS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO COSPONSOR AND SUPPORT H.R. 96 (VETERAN'S DENTAL CARE)

WHEREAS, The purpose of the Veteran's Administration is, in the words of Abraham Lincoln, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan"; and

WHEREAS, The Veterans Administration provides health care to many Veterans through its 1,250 health care facilities, including 172 VA Medical Centers and 1,069 outpatient sites of care of varying complexity; and

WHEREAS, After serving our Country, our Veterans have earned the very best healthcare possible, something the Veteran's Administrations has pledged to provide; and

WHEREAS, Despite providing various types of healthcare to over 9 million Veterans, the Veteran's Health Administration (VHA) fails to provide dental care to most of those Veterans; and

WHEREAS, According to the VHA's own statistics, while over 9 million Veterans are eligible for healthcare under the VHA, only about 500,000, or 5.6%, of those are receiving dental care, as the qualifications require a Veteran to be 100% disabled or have been a POW to receive full dental care; and

WHEREAS, While Veterans are able to purchase dental insurance through the VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP), it is not an affordable option, leaving Veterans with no other choice but to walk around with rotted teeth and other signs of a lack of dental care; and

WHEREAS, Dental health has been proven to affect other aspects of health including cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes and more. Good dental care can prevent many of these diseases, leading the VA to save money on treating future diseases; and

WHEREAS, According to the 2016 Oral Health in Illinois Report, in 2015, over one third of adults in Illinois (36%) reported not having visited the dentist in the past year, with lack of insurance being one of the barriers to dental care; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 96 introduced by U.S. Rep. Julia Brownley would amend Title 38, USC, to require the Veteran's Administration to furnish dental care in the same manner as any other medical service, giving more Veterans access to full dental care that they severely need; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby recognize the right of all Veterans to have full coverage for dental care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners urges the Illinois Congressional Delegation to sign on as co-sponsors to H.R. 96 and support it in any manner possible to ensure that our Veterans receive the proper and sufficient dental care that they deserve; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and copies of this resolution be presented to U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, and U.S. Representative Bobby Rush as representatives of the delegation.

