

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Supporting a study of the potential creation of a Department of Veterans Affairs as a cabinet-level department.

WHEREAS, the State of South Dakota has more than 74,000 veterans in the state; and

WHEREAS, the veterans of South Dakota generate more than \$352 million from earned federal benefits into the South Dakota economy; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Veterans Affairs implements programs and services that have the potential of affecting more than 74,000 living veterans and more than 185,000 dependents and survivors of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, the current Division of Veterans Affairs is responsible for the successful operation of the claims office located at the VA Regional Office in Sioux Falls, veterans educational and job training programs, and the training and administration of county/tribal veterans service officers. In addition, the division works closely with the operation of the Michael J. Fitzmaurice South Dakota State Veterans Home; and

WHEREAS, the veterans of this state should have an avenue of access to the executive branch of state government commensurate with the sacrifices they have made for our country in time of peace and in time of war; and

WHEREAS, it has been proposed that the Division of Veterans Affairs, the principal state agency charged with providing benefits and services to veterans and their dependents and survivors, be elevated to a department with cabinet-level status:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Eighty-fourth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the Legislature supports a study to evaluate the feasibility and advisability of creating an independent cabinet-level agency to address veterans affairs, which would allow the veterans of South Dakota the same oversight and consideration as other state departments.

Adopted by the Senate,
Concurred in by the House of Representatives,

February 12, 2009
March 2, 2009

Dennis Daugaard
President of the Senate

Trudy Evenstad
Secretary of the Senate

Timothy A. Rave
Speaker of the House

Karen Gerdes
Chief Clerk of the House