

1 A RESOLUTION urging the United States Congress to enact comprehensive  
2 support for caregivers to veterans of all eras.

3 WHEREAS, all veterans deserve to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, studies confirm caregivers improve our veteran patients' health, reduce  
6 hospital readmissions, and delay institutionalization; and

7 WHEREAS, caregivers often make personal sacrifices in terms of their own health  
8 and well-being by serving in this critical role; and

9 WHEREAS, a National Alliance for Caregiving study found the vast majority of  
10 caregivers of disabled veterans, from all war eras, reported increased stress or anxiety and  
11 sleep deprivation. The report shows declines in healthy behaviors of caregivers, such as  
12 exercising, eating habits and keeping their own medical appointments; and

13 WHEREAS, this study also found that over half of the caregivers had cut back their  
14 number of work hours and almost half stopped working or took early retirement, resulting  
15 in financial hardship for themselves and their families; and

16 WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) found that without a  
17 caregiver, three out of four survey respondents believed their loved one would be  
18 institutionalized now or in the future, and that the toll on their own health and well-being  
19 was significant. More than half reported caregiving had significantly impacted their  
20 financial security. Nearly 80 percent reported an impact on their mental health and  
21 careers, and over 80 percent said their role somewhat or significantly affected their  
22 friendships, family life, and physical health; and

23 WHEREAS, in 2010 the United States Congress enacted Public Law 111-163,  
24 requiring the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide comprehensive caregiver  
25 supports and services to family caregivers of severely injured veterans. Such assistance  
26 includes caregiver education and training, respite care, mental health services, a monthly  
27 stipend, and enrollment in CHAMPVA for health care coverage; and

1 WHEREAS, the United States Congress limited participation in the program to  
2 veterans injured on or after September 11, 2001, due to cost concerns; and

3 WHEREAS, the VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers  
4 was established. Once the federal law was enacted, preliminary findings from a  
5 comprehensive evaluation show that caregivers in the program are more confident and  
6 better prepared in their role and that the stipend is reducing the financial strain of  
7 caregiving. The evaluation also indicates increased use of health care services by  
8 participating veterans which could lead to better health outcomes; and

9 WHEREAS, despite these positive findings, countless caregivers of veterans are  
10 still not eligible to participate in the program because of the arbitrary delimiting date; and

11 WHEREAS, after a lifetime of caregiving many family caregivers are aging and  
12 their ability to continue in their role is declining. Though most family caregivers continue  
13 to willingly undertake this role, they require and deserve supports and services to mitigate  
14 the negative physical, emotional, and financial consequences of caregiving; and

15 WHEREAS, the United States Congress should enact legislation to improve and  
16 authorize comprehensive supports, benefits, and services for family caregivers of severely  
17 ill and injured veterans of all eras;

18 NOW, THEREFORE,

19 ***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the***  
20 ***Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

21 ➔Section 1. The House of Representatives respectfully urges the United States  
22 Congress to enact H.R. 1472/S. 591, the Military and Veteran Caregiver Services  
23 Improvement Act of 2017.

24 ➔Section 2. The House of Representatives respectfully urges the United States  
25 Congress to enact H.R. 1802, the CARE for All Veterans Act.

26 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a  
27 copy of this Resolution to the President of the United States and the members of the

- 1 Kentucky Congressional Delegation.