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111th Congress (2009-2010)  
House Report 111-559**

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**House Report 111-559 - MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2011**

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**MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH**

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Fiscal year 2010 enacted level	\$581,000,000
Fiscal year 2011 budget request	590,000,000
Committee recommendation in the bill	590,000,000
Comparison with:	
Fiscal year 2010 enacted level	9,000,000
Fiscal year 2011 budget request	-----
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This appropriation provides for medical, rehabilitative, and health services research. Medical research is an important aspect of the Department's programs, providing complete medical and hospital services for veterans. The prosthetic research program is also essential in the development and testing of prosthetic, orthopedic, and sensory aids for the purpose of improving the care and rehabilitation of eligible disabled veterans, including amputees, paraplegics, and the blind. The health services research program provides unique opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the health care delivery system. In addition, budgetary resources from a number of areas including appropriations from the medical care accounts, reimbursements from the Department of Defense, grants from the National Institutes of Health, private proprietary sources, and voluntary organizations provide support for the Department's researchers. Estimated total research resources in 2011 are \$1,890,000,000. The VA will support about 2,350 research projects during fiscal year 2011.

The Committee recommends \$590,000,000 for Medical and Prosthetic Research, an increase of \$9,000,000 above the fiscal year 2010 enacted level and the same as the budget request.

*Vietnam veterans longitudinal study.*--The Committee understands that the VA has reincarnated the national longitudinal study of Vietnam veterans that has been moribund for much of the decade and that awards are due to be made in August 2010. The Committee urges the VA to proceed as quickly as possible with the study. The longer the study is delayed, the harder it becomes to locate study subjects and develop representative sample populations. The Committee directs the VA to submit a report by January 1, 2011 detailing the progress made with award of the contract; identification of sample populations; development of study protocol and research questions; and timeframes for completion of research, data analysis, and publication of results.

In addition, the Secretary is urged to conduct epidemiological studies of existing VA medical data to determine if there are anomalies and differences that become apparent based on location of different duty stations or periods of service. Results of these studies shall be made public by means of submission of articles to recognized peer reviewed scientific and medical publications.

*Infrastructure review.*--The Committee has not yet received the report, requested in 2005, on a comprehensive review of VA research facilities and their deficiencies. The Committee understands that the work on this report is largely complete and directs the VA to provide it by September 1, 2010. As part of this review, the Committee also requests an analysis of the square footage dedicated to research space that was renovated, modified, or constructed in fiscal year 2009 with funding from Medical Facilities or Major or Minor Construction and the priority ranking of each research facility project in Major or Minor Construction for fiscal years 2010 and 2011.

**MEDICAL CARE COLLECTIONS FUND**

The Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Care Collections Fund (MCCF) was established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-33). The Department deposits first-party and pharmacy co-payments, third-party insurance payments and enhanced-use collections, long-term care co-payments, Compensated Work Therapy Program collections, Compensation and Pension Living Expenses Program collections, and Parking Program fees into the MCCF. The Department uses these funds for medical care and services to veterans. The Congressional Budget Office estimate of fees that will be collected in fiscal year 2011 is \$3,393,000,000.

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**Committee Reports  
111th Congress (2009-2010)  
Senate Report 111-226**

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**Senate Report 111-226 - MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL, 2011**

Full Display		Related Information	
PDF	Printer Friendly Display	Bill Summary and Status	Full Text of Bill

**MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH**

Appropriations, 2010y	\$581,000,000
Budget estimate, 2011	590,000,000
Committee recommendation	590,000,000

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Medical and prosthetic research account provides funds for medical, rehabilitative, and health services research. Medical research supports basic and clinical studies that advance knowledge leading to improvements in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disabilities. Rehabilitation research focuses on rehabilitation engineering problems in the fields of prosthetics, orthotics, adaptive equipment for vehicles, sensory aids and related areas. Health services research focuses on improving the effectiveness and economy of the delivery of health services.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee recommends \$590,000,000 for Medical and prosthetic research. This is \$9,000,000 above the fiscal year 2010 enacted level and equal to the budget request.

The Committee remains highly supportive of this program, and recognizes its importance both in improving healthcare services to veterans and recruiting and retaining high-quality medical professionals in the Veterans Health Administration. Through the Department's research and development program, the VA has implemented a comprehensive research agenda to develop new treatments and tools for clinicians to ease the physical and psychological pain of men and women returning from war zones, to improve access to VA healthcare services, and to accelerate discoveries and applications, especially for neurotrauma, sensory loss, amputation, polytrauma, and related prosthetic needs.

*Nursing Research Program*- The Committee supports the Veterans Affairs Nursing Research Program, which facilitates research on the specific nursing needs of combat veterans and aging veterans. The Committee strongly supports continuation of this program. The Committee also encourages collaboration between VA nurses and recipients of Tri Service Nursing Research Program awards in the exploration of research proposals that improve the health and well-being of their shared beneficiary population.

*Longitudinal Study*- On September 14, 2009, the Secretary announced that the VA would fulfill its mandate carried in section 212 of Public Law 106-419, the Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000, by soliciting bids for the National Vietnam Veterans Longitudinal Study. This follow-up study will provide long awaited data on long-term effects of combat-related post traumatic stress disorder [PTSD] among Vietnam veterans, regardless of whether these veterans were utilizing the VA system, and the effectiveness of VA medical care in treating PTSD. The Committee is pleased to learn that the VA is undertaking this independent follow-up study; however, it is concerned about the length of time it is taking the Department to move forward. Sufficient resources have been provided within Medical and prosthetic research to enter into a contract with an appropriate entity to carry out a study on post-traumatic stress disorder as mandated in Public Law 106-419. The Committee directs the Department to report back to the Committees on Appropriations no later than October 1, 2010, on the progress made in executing this legal requirement.

*Gulf War Illness*- The Committee directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to report to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress not later than 90 days after enactment of this act on specific research efforts related to gulf war illness and the ways in which the Department's research efforts are coordinated with similar programs at the Department of Defense, the Institute of Medicine and other Federal agencies.

**MEDICAL CARE COST RECOVERY COLLECTIONS**

**MEDICAL CARE COLLECTION FUND**

Appropriations, 2010	\$2,954,000,000
Budget estimate, 2011	2,405,000,000
Committee recommendation	3,393,000,000

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