

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 11

2 **56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2023**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 URGING CONGRESS TO INVESTIGATE THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
12 VETERANS AFFAIRS AND THE DELAY IN THE VETERANS AFFAIRS'
13 SCHEDULE FOR RATING DISABILITIES SYSTEM'S FAILURE TO MAKE
14 RATING DETERMINATIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER.

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16 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a significant number of people who
17 have served in the United States armed forces and have
18 contributed greatly to the security of the state and this great
19 nation; and

20 WHEREAS, a significant number of veterans in New Mexico
21 were injured in combat or while training for combat; and

22 WHEREAS, the United States department of veterans affairs'
23 schedule for rating disabilities is based on a veteran's
24 severity of the veteran's service-connected condition and
25 determines how much disability compensation the veteran will

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1 receive each month in benefits; and

2 WHEREAS, the veterans affairs' disability rating system
3 has consistently taken months and sometimes years to properly
4 rate veterans who made huge sacrifices by serving; and

5 WHEREAS, determinations for veterans with terminal
6 diagnoses are taking several months when these determinations
7 are supposed to take no more than thirty days; and

8 WHEREAS, many veterans suffer from physical and severe
9 mental health issues brought on or exacerbated by military
10 service; and

11 WHEREAS, many veterans cannot fully participate in the
12 workforce or earn a living due to these injuries, nor can they
13 afford the health care needed to deal with these health
14 problems; and

15 WHEREAS, many veterans are not aware that their military
16 retirement benefits do not cover end-of-life care, including
17 care in a long-term care facility, home health care and
18 numerous other benefits only available to veterans with a
19 minimum seventy percent service-connected rating; and

20 WHEREAS, previously, the disability rating system was
21 functioning more smoothly, and determinations were being done
22 in a more expeditious manner; and

23 WHEREAS, the United States department of veterans affairs
24 has failed to maintain the standards and time lines to award
25 disability benefits in a timely manner;

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