



# Caring for our Veterans

## Background:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides or purchases long-term care for eligible veterans through 14 long-term care programs in institutional settings like nursing homes and noninstitutional settings like veteran's personal homes.

A September 2021 VA report to Congress on long-term care projections indicated veterans over age 85 were the fastest growing veteran population in the VA's health care system. Over the next 20 years, the number of veterans in that age group eligible for nursing home care will increase from 61,000 to 387,000, a 535% jump. The VA acknowledged in the report the value of rebalancing long-term services and support and shifting resources from nursing home care to home and community-based services.

While the VA works proactively to extend care to aging and disabled veterans, lawmakers are also advancing legislation like the **Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act (S.141, H.R.542)** to expand, accelerate, and supplement the department's ability to meet the rapidly growing needs of veterans, their families, and caregivers.

Currently, the VA can only spend up to 65% of the cost of institutional care for the home care services needed by these veterans. For many catastrophically disabled veterans, the cost of their care can quickly exceed the 65% limit, although still costing the VA less than other care settings. Section 3 of the Dole Act would have allowed the Department of Veterans Affairs to spend the same amount on noninstitutional care as institutional care for veterans that receive nursing home level care in their homes.

Unfortunately, this section was recently stripped from S.141, depriving veterans of the choice to remain in their homes, the less costly site of care.

## Our Ask:

We urge that Section 3 be included in S.141 going forward so that our nation's veterans have the option to receive the care they need in their own homes, where they wish to remain.

Co-sponsor H.R. 452, introduced by Representative Julia Brownley

The Home Care Association of America fully supports the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act and will continue to work with legislators in forming and implementing the bill's laudable goals.