

every effort should be made to accelerate the Veterans' Administration construction and modernization program.

The shortage of health-service manpower is considered acute today. It is expected to become even more serious in the immediate future. In his 1967 health and education message, President Johnson said: "Within the next decade this Nation will need 1 million more health workers."

We share the President's concern for the Nation over the growing national shortage of health-service manpower. AMVETS recognize the Veterans' Administration's great potential for training health personnel under Public Law 89-785 and urge that the Veterans' Administration continue to use its hospital system to train more personnel for health services, thus serving the Nation and providing the highest quality of medical care to our veteran patients.

The economic profile of veterans of age 65 and over shows that they have an annual income of \$2,700 and less hospital insurance and ready assets than other veteran groups. Medically, the veteran age 65 and over suffers more disabilities and requires more care that results in longer periods of hospitalization. Therefore, AMVETS recommend that veterans who have reached the age of 65, with non-service-connected disabilities, not be required to sign an affidavit stating they are unable to pay the cost of hospital care.

Public Law 88-450 authorizes the Veterans' Administration to operate 4,000 nursing home care beds and to participate in the construction of State homes for furnishing nursing home care. Also, at the present time, there are no veterans hospitals in Alaska and Hawaii. Veterans with non-service-connected disabilities cannot be placed in private hospitals at the Government's expense. The Veterans' Administration does place non-service-connected veterans in other Federal hospitals under a contract arrangement. This does not provide community nursing home care under the present law. Because of our concern and the need for additional nursing home care beds, AMVETS strongly recommend—

1. That the Veterans' Administration be authorized to operate more nursing home care beds in addition to the 4,000 now in operation under Public Law 88-450;
2. That authorization, under Public Law 88-450, providing grants for the construction of State homes to provide nursing home care, be extended beyond the expiration date of June 30, 1969;
3. That authorization be given to the Veterans' Administration for the purpose of operating nursing home care beds in Alaska and Hawaii; and
4. That in the planning for the construction of new hospitals, every consideration be given to including nursing home care beds in the initial plan.

INSURANCE

In 1965 Congress reopened the national service life insurance program on a limited basis. The response indicated there would be little interest in a general reopening to all eligible veterans.

Veterans being separated from service with a serious service-connected disability from World War II and Korea were uninsurable in the eyes of the commercial industry. These men faced problems since