

Washington, D.C. - In advance of Veterans Day, Congressman John Barrow (GA-12) introduced H.R. 4041, legislation to authorize improvements to the Federal Recovery Coordinator Program (FRCP). The creation of FRCP was one of the key recommendations of the Dole-Shalala Commission Report that was issued in 2007.

Barrow's legislation would hire 45 additional Federal Recovery Coordinators over the course of three years.

The legislation would also allocate \$1.2 million to host a consensus conference/literature review to develop guidelines for FRCP and \$1.2 million to create a software program for FRCP.

"The need for additional personnel for this program is clear," said Barrow. "The FRCP was a key recommendation of the Dole-Shalala Commission, and it's an important program. We need to get more folks in those jobs so that more soldiers coming back from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan can get the help they need and deserve."

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The goal of FRCP was to cut through bureaucratic red tape and implement a coordinated recovery program through the Veterans Administration (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) for sick and wounded service members returning to the United States. The VA announced the creation of FRCP in May of 2008, but to date only 15 Federal Recovery Coordinators have been hired through the program. Approximately 300 service members have gone through the program, but many more service members could benefit from this program.

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The Dole-Shalala Commission was charged by former President Bush with investigating problems at Walter Reed and throughout the military health care system in the wake of the

scandal at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center that came to light in 2007. The Commission, chaired by former Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, issued a report in 2007, with a list of key recommendations to improve care within the military. The Federal Recovery Coordinator Program was one of their key recommendations, but it has not been fully implemented as of this time.

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Contact: Jane Brodsky, (202) 225-2823

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