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### **AKAKA INTRODUCES VETERANS' EMERGENCY CARE FAIRNESS BILL**

*Bill would cover gaps in emergency care reimbursement for vets with limited insurance*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Yesterday U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI), Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, introduced **the Veterans' Emergency Fairness Act of 2009**. This bill would enable the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to reimburse veterans enrolled with VA for the remaining costs of emergency treatment received outside of VA's health care system if the veteran has outside insurance that only covers part of the cost. Under current law, VA can reimburse veterans or pay outside hospitals directly only if a veteran has no outside health insurance.

*"Because insurance may not cover all costs, a trip to the ER can leave insured veterans financially crippled. My bill would enable VA to fill the gap for veterans whose outside insurance does not meet their needs,"* said Akaka.

In addition to reimbursing veterans for future costs of emergency care, the bill would allow the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide retroactive reimbursements back to May 2000 when VA was first authorized generally to cover the cost of outside emergency care for veterans enrolled with VA for their care.

Chairman Akaka's full floor statement is available [here](#).