

## **In-Theater Destruction of Medical Records Resolution 18-07**

**WHEREAS**, there is credible evidence that during the withdrawals of United States forces from military operations in and near Kuwait (Operation Desert Storm) and Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom), individual patient military combat medical records were destroyed rather than being returned to the Continental United States (CONUS) for consolidation with the individual service members' CONUS medical records, as required by military regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, in-theater destruction of medical records was authorized and encouraged on the basis that there was inadequate military transportation available; and

**WHEREAS**, there are credible accounts that United States military field hospital administrators in charge of individual patient combat medical records were instructed that if they wanted to return individual patient medical records to CONUS they would have to do so by commercial shipping at their own expense; and

**WHEREAS**, at least one military medical administrator at a United States military field hospital being closed in Mosul, Iraq, shipped individual military combat medical records to CONUS at personal expense, rather than destroying those records in theater; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of in-theater destruction of individual patient combat medical records veterans of the wars in Kuwait and Iraq are experiencing significant problems proving to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs that their war-related illnesses and injuries are military service or combat related;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that ROA, chartered by Congress, urge Congress to enact legislation directing the presumption that the injuries and illnesses of military personnel whose individual combat medical records may have been destroyed in theater during withdrawal of United States forces from military operations in or near Kuwait and Iraq are combat related and service related.

Renewed by the National Convention, 30 Sep 2018

Adopted by the National Council, 18 Mar 2015(Resolution No. 15-01)

Source: Department of Golden West, 27 Sep 2014