

Veterans groups oppose insurance move

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- A White House proposal to charge U.S. veterans' private insurance companies for treatment of combat-related injuries is unethical, opponents say.

Veterans groups and some lawmakers have promised to fight the proposal, while White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel and veterans' leaders are set to meet on the topic this week, The Washington Post reported Wednesday.

The Obama administration says the proposal, which is intended to save the Department of Veterans Affairs \$530 million per year, would allow the department to bill private insurance companies for the treatment of such battle wounds as amputations and post-traumatic stress disorder. They would join non-combat injuries as costs billable to insurers.

But the veterans' groups say the move is unethical because it relieves the government of its moral responsibility to care for the war wounded.

"The VA has an obligation to pay for service-related care and they should not be nickel-and-diming vets in the process," U.S. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., told the Post.

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