



Carsey: South, Rural America Have Highest Percent Of Disabled Veterans

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DURHAM, N.H. –Veterans with service-related disabilities are concentrated in the American South and in rural places, a new report from the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire finds. Issued to commemorate Veteran’s Day (Nov. 11), the report analyzes new data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2008 American Community Survey, which released service-related disability data for the first time.

“The concentration of disabled veterans in the South and rural America is largely because veterans represent a higher percentage of the total population in these places, although there also are some differences in the rate of disability among veterans,” says report author Beth Mattingly, who is director of research on vulnerable families at the Carsey Institute and a research assistant professor of sociology at UNH. “As we remember those who sacrificed this Veteran’s Day, we should recognize that rural places and the South may be especially in need of facilities to aid disabled veterans.”

Mattingly, who co-authored the report with Carsey research assistant Michelle Stransky, also notes that the high proportion of disabled veterans in rural America presents the compound challenge of transportation over long distances as an obstacle to obtaining services.

Among the key findings of the report:

- Nearly 1.5 percent of U.S. adults, an estimated 3.4 million, are veterans who have sustained service-related disabilities.
- In the South, an estimated 1.75 percent of adults are veterans with service-related disabilities. This is significantly higher than in any other region.
- Other regional differences are also significant. The concentration of disabled veterans is lowest in the Northeast, followed by the Midwest and West.
- In the Northeast, Midwest, and West, rural places have the highest proportion of disabled veterans, followed by the suburbs and then central cities. In the South, there are no significant differences by place.
- Rural rates are highest in the West, where an estimated two out of every 100 adults is a veteran with a service-related disability.

The report, “Rural America and the South Have the Highest Concentration of Veterans with Service Related Disabilities” is available to download at <http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publications/FS-Mattingly-Military-Disabilities-2009.pdf>.

The Carsey Institute conducts policy and applied research on vulnerable families and on sustainable community development, giving policy makers and practitioners the timely, independent resources they need to effect change in their communities. Learn more at <http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/>.

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