

Date

Dear (name of Representative or Senator),

I am writing to you to ask that you help to lead the VA Healthcare system into a new phase of its history by standing with the VA and the Veterans it serves and not allowing any of the Commission on Care recommendations that seek to dismantle it to be put into law. I am a social worker who works closely with veterans and their families in the VA Healthcare system. (OPTIONAL: provide more information about your experience in serving veterans) The VA system has no doubt been struggling with the explosion of complex patients both at the front end (absorbing the new, injured and ill Veterans ) as well as on the back end (with the growth of the Aging Veteran population). We have continued to succeed in providing the best care anywhere with a focus on the whole person and family, and the network of programs and services we can offer that is founded in our knowledge of Veterans issues. No other system makes such an effort to ensure that social workers are as integrated in the system as the VA does. This translates to real case management and real holistic, integrated care.

(Optional: As a member of the Association of VA Social Workers,) I have been following the Commission's reports since they were created, and like President Obama & Secretary McDonald, I wholly support many of the recommendation and feel that the VA is already well on its way to addressing these through the MyVA initiatives. However, I am strongly opposed to any measures that would dismantle the integrity of the VA healthcare system as a seamless entity of care. Although so much needs to be updated and strengthened to help us handle the influx and volume of patients, we have the best, most professional staff anywhere and we are spoiled by the way we are able to communicate and work across systems in real time to ensure Veterans needs are met. The Veterans Choice program was an epic failure... leading to even more delays for care, fragmented care, costly duplication care and Veteran deaths. But that is probably not going to make the evening news.

I am sharing a link to our association page with my full letter of support for President Obama & Secretary McDonald's recommendations. <http://www.vasocialworkers.org/Advocacy.html> I urge you to stay the course and act on these in this session. Our Veterans have been waiting long enough. Thank you!

Name and Credentials

VA Facility

