

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES  
APPROPRIATIONS  
ARMED SERVICES  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

August 11, 2023

Secretary Denis McDonough  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary McDonough:

We write to express our concerns with proposed recent changes to various Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) internal policies, including the VA's proposal to change the rates for air ambulance and other special mode transportation services (AP89) and changes to the VA National Standards of Practice guidelines. Over the last few months, healthcare professionals and their associations representing members from several states, including West Virginia, have come to us to express their frustration at the lack of communication they have received from the VA regarding these changes, which could significantly disrupt their operations and potentially diminish the standard of care they provide for the veterans they serve.

More than anything, these providers are disappointed that they have not been able to communicate directly with the VA regarding the preparations they would need to make to comply with the proposed rule and the updated national standards of practice guidelines. Regrettably, this is not the first instance where healthcare professional groups have been unable to communicate with the VA. Going forward, we urge the VA to engage with these associations to ensure policy changes are in the best interest of the veterans who will require their care, and that the VA give careful consideration to their concerns and answer all questions regarding such policy changes.

We look forward to receiving your response as to how the VA plans to ensure adequate engagement with the VA's medical service providers.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito  
United States Senator