



March 23, 2017

The Honorable Mark Warner  
United States Senate  
703 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

On behalf of the Association of the United States Navy, we would like to pledge our support for S. 233, the Providing Veterans Overdue Care Act of 2017. This legislation would authorize pending leases for twenty-four Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities in 15 states. The bill seeks to improve veterans' access to healthcare through the approval of these medical leases, which would allow the VA to open needed healthcare facilities for which the VA has been seeking congressional approval for more than a year.

Under law, the V-A must receive specific legislative authorization to lease medical facilities with average annual rental payments in excess of \$1 million. However, since 2012, Congress has not, through a regular process, authorized any major V-A medical facility leases, hampering the ability of the department to provide much-needed health care and services to veterans around the country. The 24 leases pending before Congress are located in states with an estimated 11 million veterans.

One reason for the delay in congressional authorization has been a recent change in the way that the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) scores these leases. Prior to 2012, the major medical facility leases were scored on an annual basis, but that year, CBO determined that budget authority for these leases, many of which cover a 20-year period, should be recorded up front when the leases are initiated and the acquisition occurs, not when the debt is repaid. As such, scoring for legislation that authorized these leases increased significantly, even though actual spending would not increase and the leases are ultimately subject to annual appropriations.

This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to carry out major medical facility leases in specified amounts for:

- Outpatient clinics in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Daytona Beach, Gainesville, and Ocala, Florida; Hampton Roads, Virginia; Missoula, Montana; Northern Colorado, Colorado, Oxnard and Santa Rosa, California; Pike County, Georgia; Portland, Maine; and Raleigh, North Carolina.
- An outpatient mental health clinic and an outpatient specialty clinic in Birmingham, Alabama.
- Research space in Boston, Massachusetts; Charleston, South Carolina; and Mission Bay, California.

- Chief Business Office Purchased Care office space in Denver, Colorado.
- Replacement outpatient clinics in Corpus Christi, Texas; Jacksonville and Tampa, Florida; Pontiac, Michigan; Rochester, New York; and Terre Haute, Indiana.

Thank you for taking an active role in such an important issue to the Military and Veteran community by working to improve the lives and careers of those who served our great nation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 703-548-5800 or at michael.little@ausn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Joseph Little". To the right of the signature, there are handwritten notations: "ABH<sup>2</sup> (AW/Sea)" and "USNR".

Michael J. Little  
Director of Legislative Affairs