

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 5, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write today to condemn your January 20, 2025, Executive Order (EO) – entitled “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing” – and its implementation at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This EO, issued on the same day as the commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will dismantle integral VA programs serving an increasingly diverse veteran population and terminate dedicated VA employees passionate about serving America’s veterans and their families. We have a sacred obligation to serve all veterans – no matter their background. Any effort to do otherwise reneges on the promises we have made to veterans generation after generation.

The VA programs which you describe as “radical” and “wasteful” have in fact allowed VA to bolster its PACT Act outreach to rural communities, minority veterans, and women veterans; translate PACT Act fact sheets into over a dozen languages; improve care and benefits for veterans residing outside of the continental United States; implement VA health care quality improvement projects focused on equity; ensure VA is accessible for all individuals with disabilities; and increase contract awards to women owned small businesses and small disadvantaged businesses. It is completely unacceptable that the broad language in this EO leaves the door open for these critical initiatives and more to be abruptly terminated, and calls on VA personnel to report fellow veteran-serving employees who “disguise these programs.”

Serving our nation’s veterans means serving a population with extremely diverse needs – from Native veterans requiring information on how to use their VA health care in conjunction with the Indian Health Service, to blind veterans requiring accessible VA websites, to the growing population of women veteran small business owners who benefit from increased outreach from VA about economic opportunities. Terminating these programs will not only be a failure in ensuring all veterans’ unique needs and circumstances are being met, but will also result in the termination of a large number of veterans who proudly serve their fellow veterans as VA employees. We urge you to immediately rescind this memo, and prove to our nation’s veterans that their diverse needs and identities do not go unnoticed.

Sincerely,



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator



MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator



TAMMY DUCKWORTH
United States Senator