



# UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

JOHNNY ISAKSON | CHAIRMAN

## **The VA *MISSION* Act of 2018**

### **The VA *Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION)* Act**

#### **Streamlines VA's Community Care Programs**

- Consolidates seven VA community care programs into one streamlined program.
- Removes arbitrary 30-day/40-mile barriers to veterans' care in the community.
- Authorizes access to walk-in community clinics for enrolled veterans who have previously used VA healthcare services in the last two years.
- Authorizes local provider agreements to remove bureaucratic red tape and to meet veterans' needs for care in the community.
- Creates standards for timely payment to community care providers.
- Keeps the cost of community care in line with the cost of VA health care to ensure a veteran does not pay more for outside care.
- Requires the VA to monitor the program and report to Congress on the care provided to veterans.
- Requires the secretary to develop an education program to inform veterans and VA providers about veterans' health care options.
- Establishes a program to provide continuing medical education credits for community care providers on treating veterans.
- Requires the VA to establish and submit to Congress a strategy to ensure all VA and community care programs are operating efficiently and effectively based on a number of factors including veterans' satisfaction and access guidelines and quality standards, among others.
- Strengthens the process for VA and partnering health care providers who prescribe opioids to veterans.
- Ensures providers removed or suspended from VA practice do not treat veterans in the community.
- Provides \$5.2 billion for the Veterans Choice Fund.

#### **Improves VA Healthcare Delivery**

- Removes barriers for VA healthcare professionals to practice telemedicine.
- Provides additional resources for hiring and retention of VA healthcare professionals.
- Strengthens peer-to-peer support for veterans undergoing care for trauma or in rural areas.
- Establishes mobile deployment teams for underserved and rural facilities to provide specialized and routine health care.
- Allows VA to provide transplant procedures on a live donor.
- Allows the VA to modernize assets and infrastructure.

#### **Expands Caregivers**

- Expands eligibility for VA's Caregiver Program to veterans of all generations.
- Requires VA to implement an information technology system to better support, assess and monitor the program.

#### **Support for the VA *MISSION* Act**

**38 veteran and military advocacy organizations** that represent millions of veterans in the United States wrote a letter to the House and Senate in support of the bill.