



**THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON**

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your March 14, 2025, co-signed letter addressed to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the National Archives and Records Administration regarding the closure of the Veterans Benefits Administration Office of Equity Assurance. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your letter.

President Donald J. Trump gave me simple instructions when he offered me the role of Secretary. He told me to take great care of all Veterans. As such, everything I do is to ensure all Veterans receive the care and services they deserve and instill a lasting culture of caring, customer service, and accountability at VA that always puts Veterans first. I am equally committed to supporting the American people's mandate for President Trump to eliminate waste, bloat, and insularity to empower American families, workers, taxpayers, and our system of Government.

VA supports the efforts of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) because every identified incidence of wasteful spending can be directed toward Veteran health care and benefits. Similarly, VA supports the Administration's efforts by streamlining and finding efficiencies within the scope and bounds of the law. In any case, VA's work with DOGE and the Office of Personnel Management will not impact Veterans' access to health care or benefits.

I understand your concern that VA retain and preserve all documents, records, and communications in our possession, custody, or control as of January 20, 2025, in accordance with the law. I am aware of the statutory requirements of 44 U.S.C. Ch. 31, and I assure you that VA complies with these requirements.

VA Directive 6300, Records and Information Management, contains the policies and responsibilities for the VA Records and Information Management Program, which incorporates the Federal Records Act, the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act. This directive consolidates policy relating to information created, received, collected, processed, maintained, released, disclosed, or disposed of by or for VA, in any medium or form, including information managed by VA or a third party on behalf of VA.

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VA creates and preserves records that document the historical functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency. I assure you that VA maintains and preserves records necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by these activities.

The support and research highlighted in your letter addressing unequal treatment of Veterans, such as the disparities in mental health claim approvals for Black Veterans, are responsibilities statutorily mandated to the Center for Minority Veterans (CMV) under P.L. 103-446, the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 1994, enacted on November 2, 1994. This law established CMV to advise the Secretary on the adoption and implementation of policies and programs affecting minority Veterans. In addition, VA Directive 0801, Minority Veteran Program (MVP), further delineates the roles, procedures, duties, and responsibilities of the CMV Director, CMV Program Manager, CMV Program Analysts, VA Central Office MVP Liaisons, and MVP Coordinators, serving as the primary resource for stakeholders. These efforts are further reinforced by provisions in the STRONG Veterans Act of 2022 (Division V of P.L. 117-328). CMV also maintains a website and tracks VA's efforts and data regarding minority Veterans.

My commitment to all Veterans and VA is steadfast. Everything I do is to ensure all Veterans receive the care and services they deserve and instill lasting culture of caring, customer service, and accountability that always puts Veterans first.

I provided a similar response to Representative Takano. Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Collins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Douglas A. Collins

Cc: The Honorable Jerry Moran