



**THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON**

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Mark Takano
Ranking Member
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20215

Dear Representative Takano:

Thank you for your February 7, 2025, co-signed letter to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requesting a justification for VA's adherence to an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) communication about compensating civil servants who voluntarily resign from the Federal Government. I appreciate this opportunity to respond to your inquiry.

As you know, the American people's mandate for President Donald Trump is to "eliminate waste, bloat, and insularity to empower American families, workers, taxpayers, and our system of Government itself." The OPM communication referenced in your letter was issued to support and realize President Trump's vision of a streamlined and efficient Government workforce.

VA is part of the Executive Branch and, as such, is fully committed to contributing to President Trump's ultimate objective of reining in Government waste for the sake of the American taxpayers. Although you have requested various types of documents and analyses related to VA's adherence to the OPM communication, VA's only roadmap to providing compensation to civil servants who voluntarily resign from the Federal Government was the OPM communication, which is a direct manifestation of President Trump's promise to the American people.

Despite the personnel changes that may result because of the civil servants who voluntarily resign, VA continues to take the following necessary steps to ensure all mission-critical positions are not impacted. For example, hiring continues for more than 300,000 essential positions that are exempt from the hiring freeze and the Deferred Resignation Program because they provide health care and other vital services to Veterans. For additional flexibility, VA created a process that Department leaders with pressing hiring needs can use to request additional exceptions to the hiring freeze.

My commitment to Veterans and VA is steadfast. Everything I do is in pursuit of ensuring Veterans receive the care and services they deserve, and instilling a lasting culture of caring, customer service, and accountability that always puts Veterans first.

Page 2.

The Honorable Mark Takano

A courtesy copy of this response was sent to the cosigner of your letter. Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Collins', with a stylized, cursive script.

Douglas A. Collins

Cc: The Honorable Richard Blumenthal