Dear Mr. Chairman:

Consistent with my letters to you on April 9 and April 26, 2018, this letter serves as final notification that available funding for the Veterans Choice Program (VCP), established by the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, Public Law 113-146, as amended (Choice Act), will be exhausted as early as May 31, 2018. Once this occurs, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will be unable to create new referrals or authorizations under this program. This will have a dramatic, negative impact on our Veteran population.

More than 1.9 million unique Veterans have received care through VCP since its implementation. Challenges associated with transitioning from VCP to other care programs should not be underestimated. Other community care programs will not have the capacity to handle all of the patients who will transition from VCP, and the wait time for appointments at VA facilities will rise if large numbers of Veterans return to VA to seek care. As a result, we can expect decreased access to care, damaged community partnerships, and interrupted care continuity for Veterans.

My highest priority is working with you to avoid any service disruptions for our Veterans. I know that Congress continues to work on bipartisan legislation that would establish a permanent successor to VCP, as well as to secure funding to avoid program and service disruptions. I wholeheartedly support these efforts and stand ready to assist. Please contact me directly should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Wilkie
Acting
The Honorable Tim Walz  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Congressman Walz:

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Robert L. Wilkie
Acting
The Honorable Johnny Isakson  
Chairman  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC  20510  

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Sincerely,

Robert L. Wilkie
Acting
The Honorable Jon Tester  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC  20510

Dear Congressman Tester:

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Sincerely,

Robert L. Wilkie
Acting
May 7, 2018

The Honorable Charlie Dent
Chairman
Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Sincerely,

Robert L. Wilkie
Acting
The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz:

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Sincerely,

Robert L. Wilkie  
Acting
The Honorable John Boozman  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  

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The Honorable Brian Schatz  
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Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
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[Signature]

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