
May 13, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chair
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Room S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Ossoff
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Room S-146 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Boozman and Ranking Member Ossoff:

On behalf of the Western Governors Association (WGA), I am pleased to see the Subcommittee considering appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in fiscal year 2026. With one-third of the known veteran population residing in western states, the overall well-being of veterans is important to Western Governors.

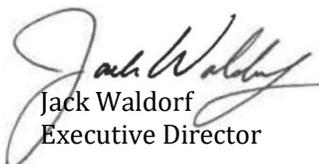
Attached please find WGA Policy Resolution 2023-08, Veterans, which conveys Western Governors' collective policy on veterans' issues. The resolution emphasizes the importance of focusing on mental health care and suicide prevention for veterans. Additionally, it points out the need to ensure veterans can readily understand their entitled benefits, particularly by enhancing support for recognized Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs). Western Governors also recognize the essential function of VSOs in helping veterans navigate the VA's claims and benefits system. Western Governors appreciate the Subcommittee's past support for VSOs and recommend the Subcommittee provide sufficient funding to offset the costs of training and to enhance the workforce capacity of VSOs to bolster their ability to serve our nation's veterans.

Western Governors emphasize the urgent need for veterans to have timely access to high-quality healthcare. To that end, the Governors recommend the Subcommittee prioritize the resources needed for VA to effectively recruit, train, and retain healthcare professionals like physicians, nurses, and mental health specialists. Additionally, acknowledging the crucial role of third-party providers in the VA's long-term care, the Governors recommend that the Subcommittee provide adequate funding to enhance assisted living and comprehensive care programs for veterans.

Western Governors applaud the Subcommittee's efforts to fund programs that positively affect veterans' daily lives, particularly in rural areas, and stand ready to work with you on ways to improve our services to veterans.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact me if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,



Jack Waldorf
Executive Director

Attachment