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118TH CONGRESS }
2d Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ REPORT
118-941

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

ACTIVITIES REPORT

Submitted in accordance with House Rule XI(D)(1)



DECEMBER 20, 2024.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House
on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, December 20, 2024.

Hon. KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Acting Clerk, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MISTER CLERK: Pursuant to rule XI 1(d)(1) of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I respectfully submit this report on the activities of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs during the 118th Congress.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

MIKE BOST,
Chairman.

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MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

MIKE BOST, Illinois, *Chairman*
MARK TAKANO, California, *Ranking Member*
(14–11)¹

AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN, American Samoa, <i>Vice-Chairman</i>	JULIA BROWNLEY, California MIKE LEVIN, California, <i>Vice-Chairman</i>
JACK BERGMAN, Michigan	CHRIS PAPPAS, New Hampshire
NANCY MACE, South Carolina	FRANK MRVAN, Indiana
MATT ROSENDALE, Montana	SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Florida
MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS, Iowa	MORGAN McGARVEY, Kentucky
GREG MURPHY, North Carolina	DELIA RAMIREZ, Illinois
SCOTT FRANKLIN, Florida	GREG LANDSMAN, Ohio
DERRICK VAN ORDEN, Wisconsin	NIKKI BUDSZINSKI, Illinois
MORGAN LUTTRELL, Texas	TIMOTHY KENNEDY, New York
JUAN CISCOMANI, Arizona	
ELI CRANE, Arizona	
KEITH SELF, Texas	
JEN KIGGANS, Virginia	

JON CLARK, *Majority Staff Director*
MATT REEL, *Minority Staff Director*

¹On June 3, 2024, Representative Chris Deluzio of Pennsylvania resigned his Committee membership, including the Subcommittees on Health and Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

On June 3, 2024, Representative Timothy Kennedy of New York was appointed to the Committee.

On September 10, 2024, Representative Timothy Kennedy of New York was appointed to the Subcommittees on Oversight and Investigations and Technology Modernization.

On September 10, 2024, Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick of Florida resigned from the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and was appointed to the Subcommittee on Health.

On September 10, 2024, Representative Greg Landsman of Ohio resigned from the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization and was appointed to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

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DECEMBER 20, 2024.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. TAKANO, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, pursuant to House Rule XI, Clause 1(D)(1), submitted the following

R E P O R T

JURISDICTION OF THE COMMITTEE

Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives establishes the standing Committees of the House and their jurisdiction. Under that Rule, all bills, resolutions, and other matters relating to the subjects within the jurisdiction of any standing Committee shall be referred to such Committee. Clause 1(s) of Rule X establishes the jurisdiction of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs as follows:

- (1) Veterans' measures generally.
- (2) Cemeteries of the United States in which veterans of any war or conflict are or may be buried, whether in the United States or abroad (except cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior).
- (3) Compensation, vocational rehabilitation, and education of veterans.
- (4) Life insurance issued by the Government on account of service in the Armed Forces.
- (5) Pensions of all the wars of the United States, general and special.
- (6) Readjustment of servicemembers to civil life.
- (7) Servicemembers' civil relief.
- (8) Veterans' hospitals, medical care, and treatment of veterans.

AUTHORIZATION AND OVERSIGHT PLAN

In accordance with clause 2 of Rule X, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs submits its Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 118th Congress. The Committee conducts its oversight with the help of five Subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, the Subcommittee on Health, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, and the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization. It is expected that oversight of the issues outlined below will be a shared responsibility of the full Committee and the appropriate subcommittees.

While the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) carries out many of its functions and programs under the authority of broad, organic statutes pertaining to health care, benefits, or the organization of the Department, some programs operate under specific authorizations. These are indicated in the applicable subcommittee sections. Programs whose authorizations soon expire are emphasized. The Committee plans to devote particular attention to major VA information technology (IT) programs and projects, all of which have yet to be authorized. This Congress, the Committee will individually consider whether to authorize each such program or project.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS

- **Authorizations of Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Programs**—Each Congress, the Committee authorizes or reauthorizes VA programs in the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. The Committee will continue to authorize on a case-by-case basis for new legislation and will review and determine reauthorizations for existing programs. During the 117th Congress, Titles II, III, and IV of P.L. 117–168, *the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (PACT Act)* authorized disability compensation and dependency indemnity compensation benefits for toxic-exposed veterans and their survivors and established a program to determine if additional veterans are suffering from conditions that may be linked to military toxic exposures. This legislation also requires VA to report on the implementation of those provisions. The Committee will work with VA to ensure authorized programs are implemented as Congress intended and review older programs to ensure they are funded appropriately.

- **Toxic Exposures**—The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is implementing provisions related to delivering compensation benefits for toxic-exposed veterans within *the PACT Act*. VBA began processing PACT Act-related claims on January 1st, 2023, including claims for 24 presumptive conditions. VBA did not have implementation regulations in place before it went live on January 1st. Instead, VBA published a training policy letter, which was provided to claims processors, on Regulations.gov on December 22nd, 2022. The Committee will conduct rigorous oversight of VBA's implementation of *the PACT Act* to ensure success. This will include evaluating the effectiveness of training and guidance, information technology updates, hiring procedures, outreach materials and methods, quality review, and overall veteran satisfaction.

- **VBA Quality Review**—VBA employs a variety of mechanisms to review the quality of initial claims decisions. The Compensation Service and the Office of Field Operations (OFO) are responsible for administering quality assurance of compensation claims. In 2020 and 2021, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) released four reports which found deficiencies in VBA's four quality review programs. OIG reviewed VBA's Site Visit program, Systematic Technical Accuracy Review (STAR) program, Quality Review Team program, and Consistency Study program. OIG also assessed the effectiveness of coordination between the Compensation Service and OFO and identified areas of improvement. The Committee will investigate the efficacy of VBA's quality assurance procedures and VBA's progress in addressing the gaps in the above programs. Additionally, the Committee will continue to explore how VBA has designed its quality review measures, and to what extent that design yields accurate results.

- **VBA Training**—A June 2021 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that VBA could improve its design, implementation, and evaluation of its training programs. VBA employees have also reported that VBA's Virtual and In-Person Progression (VIP) training program is of poor quality and does not adequately prepare examiners to process claims. Furthermore, the VBA manual is frequently updated, and employees are not always required to undergo new training that explains the changes. The Committee will conduct oversight into how VBA implements training and seek methods to improve training to ensure veterans receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

- **Reducing and Preventing Compensation and Pension Backlog by Modernizing VA Claims**—Veterans are experiencing longer wait times for a decision on their claim due to processing delays resulting from the pandemic. Further, the VA's inventory of pending claims has risen due to the extension of presumptive benefits to toxic-exposed veterans. As of February 4th, 2023, VA's compensation and pension inventory totaled 742,149 claims, including a backlog of 197,353 claims. The Committee will conduct oversight into how VBA reduces its claims backlog to its target of reaching a functional zero of 100,000 claims, prioritizes the oldest and most emergent claims (such as those for homeless or critically ill veterans), and provides timely and accurate decisions. Additionally, the Committee will explore how VA can further utilize technology to assist with claims processing and reduce the pending claims inventory. For example, VA is piloting the use of automation in the claims process. The Committee will assess the accuracy and timeliness of claims developed using automation.

- **Fiduciary Reform**—The Committee will review the performance of the VBA Fiduciary Program. The program is designed to provide financial security to veterans and other beneficiaries who have been determined unable to manage their VA benefit payments. In FY 2022, VA fiduciaries managed over 108,000 VA beneficiaries' benefits. Fiduciaries are designated by VA and can be a family member, close friends, or professional fiduciary. The review will include oversight of how fiduciaries are appointed; the Department's compliance with provisions in the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (P.L. 103–159), which can potentially prevent beneficiaries in the fiduciary program from purchasing firearms; and

fraud associated with the program. Moreover, in July 2021, OIG continued to identify deficiencies in the Fiduciary Program, such as significant wait times for misuse and negligence determinations and the reimbursement of misused funds. The Committee will review how VBA can better protect and serve beneficiaries needing a fiduciary.

- **National Cemeteries**—The Committee will continue oversight of the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), and the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), to include each organization’s mission, operations, and inquiries into matters of unclaimed remains, access, and the methodology for determining veteran satisfaction. Each of the above organizations provides a sacred, hallowed resting place for veterans. VA alone operates over 150 National Cemeteries to provide an honorable resting place for veterans and certain dependents. The Committee will examine several issues, including cemetery maintenance, access, construction, and overall management issues.

- **Medical Disability Exam Office (MDEO)**—Some veterans require a VA medical examination to adjudicate a claim for disability benefits. Unfortunately, there need to be more VA examiners to perform these evaluations on time, and some veterans experience lengthy delays before VA can schedule such examinations. It may be challenging for VA to timely schedule these examinations if the veteran needs to see a specialist, such as a cardiologist or orthopedic surgeon. Moreover, veterans living in rural areas may have to travel many miles to a VA facility to see a VA examiner for a disability examination. To provide veterans with more timely examinations, VA has the authority to contract with independent physicians to conduct disability examinations. The MDEO office within VBA oversees quality, timeliness, and veteran satisfaction with the program. The Committee will evaluate how MDEO plans to address underperforming contractors and ensure that contractors maintain or improve quality services for veterans.

- **Life Insurance**—On January 5th, 2021, President Trump signed P.L. 116–315, which required VA to establish a modernized Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance program by January 1st, 2023. VA refers to this program as VA Life Insurance (VALife). The Committee will conduct continuous oversight of the VA’s implementation of VALife to ensure that veterans are timely enrolled into the new program and well served. Additionally, the Committee will continue to review whether all of the VA’s active life insurance programs meet the needs of servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

- **VBA’s Physical Infrastructure**—VBA is comprised of a system of 56 Regional Offices (ROs). These ROs have an unnecessarily large infrastructure footprint due to the amount of unused space in the current telework-heavy environment, which increases costs. Additionally, the pandemic accelerated the expansion of telework and remote work within VBA. The Committee will explore VBA’s plans to reduce unnecessary space and associated costs due to its physical infrastructure.

- **Manila Regional Office**—The authorization for the Manila RO, the only overseas RO, expires on September 30th, 2024. Initially, the Manila RO was established to better provide VA services to

World War II veterans who resided in the Philippines. Since then, the Manila RO's role in benefits delivery has changed as VBA has modernized the claims process. In 2016, VA deployed the National Work Queue (NWQ), which assigned claims to whichever RO has the capacity to handle it first, rather than the more traditional model of having the Regional Office nearest the veteran handle the claim. As a result, the Manila RO began processing claims for veterans who resided outside of the Philippines. The Committee will examine whether the Manila RO's caseload, output, and quality justify the need for an overseas RO.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- **Authorizations of Economic Opportunity Programs**—Each Congress, the Committee authorizes or reauthorizes VA programs in the jurisdiction of Economic Opportunity. The Committee will continue to authorize on a case-by-case basis for new legislation and will review and determine reauthorizations for previous programs. During the 117th Congress, Sec. 302 and Sec. 303 in the *Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2022* authorized homeless veteran programs. Under the G.I. Bill, the Digital G.I. Bill Program will be completed by the end of fiscal year 2024. The Committee will work with VA to ensure authorized programs are implemented as Congress intended and review older programs to ensure they are funded appropriately.

- **Effectiveness of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP)**—The Committee continues to be concerned about the effectiveness of the TAP program, which is intended to prepare servicemembers for their return to civilian life following active duty. The Departments of Defense (DoD), Veterans Affairs, and Labor (DoL) jointly manage and provide content to the five-day course that focuses on skills needed to obtain gainful employment and provides an understanding of the benefits that are available to them from the VA and DoL. The Committee will conduct stakeholder roundtables and oversight hearings to discuss how TAP can be enhanced for transitioning servicemembers and their families. Further, the Committee plans to have personnel attend TAP classes to review the curriculum that TAP counselors are teaching at the local levels and ensure changes made to TAP in the *Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act* and the *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act* are being implemented appropriately. Finally, the Committee will work with the Committees on Armed Services and Education and the Workforce to address cross-jurisdictional issues as we improve the TAP program.

- **Effectiveness and Outcomes of Education and Training Programs for Returning Veterans**—The Post-9/11 G.I. Bill has been veterans' most generous education program since the original WWII G.I. Bill. Based on the length of service, the program funds up to full tuition and fees at public institutions of higher learning and about \$26,381 per year at private institutions, as well as provides a monthly living stipend. This stipend is based on the housing allowance paid to servicemembers at the rank of E-5 (with dependents) and the ZIP Code of the institution where the student attends the majority of their classes. The Committee will continue

oversight of the implementation of the *Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017*, the *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act*, and the *Ensuring the Best Schools for Veterans Act of 2022*.

Further, as avenues for learning and training continue to evolve and modernize, the Committee will examine these new programs and how they may fit into the construct and requirements of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill program in a post-COVID-19 world. The Committee will also conduct oversight on Veteran Success on Campus programs, and on the national education call center to ensure G.I. students are receiving the best possible service. In addition, the Committee will examine outcome measures for users of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, including graduation rates and job placement data, to ensure the effectiveness of taxpayers' investment in our veterans' education benefits. Finally, the Committee will work with the State Approving Agencies to put in place policies that protect student veterans against predatory or deceitful recruiting practices of post-secondary institutions, such as providing misinformation about student outcomes or encouraging veterans to take out unnecessary private student loans.

- **Modernization of G.I. Bill Claims Processing**—Modernizing the processing of original and supplemental G.I. Bill claims is long overdue. For decades, VA has relied on a myriad of ancient legacy systems to process these claims because previous modernization efforts have failed. The Committee will continue to conduct oversight over the current modernization effort called the Digital G.I. Bill system. An outside contractor is tasked with creating and implementing of this system as a managed service, and VA plans to roll out the bulk of the system by late 2023. This system will automate the process and reduce the caseworker's workload. The Committee will closely watch the rollout of the contractor's new software and work to protect veterans' ability to have a G.I. Bill claim processed accurately and in a timely fashion. The Committee will also hold the contractor and VA accountable if the program experiences difficulties.

- **Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Program**—VA's VR&E program provides education and training benefits for service-connected disabled veterans who face barriers to employment. The program funds all costs related to long and short-term education and training and immediate job placement services. VR&E also manages the Independent Living (IL) program, designed to enable the most severely injured veterans to live as independently as possible, in addition to the Veteran Success on Campus program, which currently stations VR&E staff at institutions of higher learning to assist students with benefits. The Committee continues to be concerned with counselor caseloads, rising job vacancies, and outcomes of VR&E programs, as well as the administration of the self-employment track of the VR&E program, which can often result in high costs. The Committee will also conduct oversight over management and overall effectiveness of the VR&E program, the "eVA" IT system, and VA's failure to provide a case management system that has been delayed after two failed attempts that have effectively wasted \$26 million.

- **Loan Guaranty Service**—VA's Loan Guaranty Service provides a loan guaranty benefit to eligible veterans and servicemembers,

which enables them to purchase a home at a competitive interest rate, without private mortgage insurance, often without requiring a down payment. This benefit is highly beneficial to veterans, servicemembers, and their families. The Committee plans to conduct oversight of the home loan program with a focus on their appraisal process as well as a new focus, ensuring that the IT systems in place to process these loans are modernized. Finally, the Committee intends to evaluate the impact of high-interest rates and inflation on the veteran homeowner and prospective home buyers and will examine ways to make the product competitive. The Loan Guaranty Service also administers grants under the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) and Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) programs. These grants, provided to eligible veterans with permanent and total service-connected disabilities, enable the veteran to adapt their current home or construct a new home that allows them to live in a home that is not obstructive to them due to their disabilities. The Committee will continue to conduct oversight of this program and enhancements that were made to this program by the *Ryan Kules and Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act*.

- **Adaptive Sports Program**—This is a program administered by VA, which provides grants to qualifying organizations that provide adaptive sports activities and opportunities at the local, regional, and national levels, including Paralympic activities, to disabled veterans and servicemembers. This program awarded \$16 million in 2022. The authorization for the Adaptive Sports Program expires on December 31st, 2024. The Committee will continue to examine how VA awards grants under this program and the organizations receiving funding, as well as how VA works with local communities and the Paralympic community to promote and enhance adaptive sports programs for disabled veterans and servicemembers.

- **Licensing and Credentialing Issues**—DoD spends billions of tax dollars to provide servicemembers with the skills needed to complete DoD's mission. Many of those skills translate well to civilian jobs. Unfortunately, not all states recognize and give credit for military training to qualify for state-licensed positions. Therefore, the training provided by DoD is essentially wasted. The Committee will review efforts by states and other entities to provide appropriate licenses and credentials to qualified veterans whose military training renders them eligible for such credentials or licenses, as well as the progress that states are making to make certain licenses and credentials transferrable across state lines.

- **Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP)**—HVRP is a program administered by DoL's Veteran Employment and Training Service (VETS), which provides grants to state and local workforce investment boards, local public agencies and nonprofit organizations, and tribal governments, including faith-based and community organizations. The organizations that compete and receive these grants provide homeless veterans with occupational, classroom, and on-the-job training, as well as job search and placement assistance. The authorization for HVRP expires on September 30th, 2024. The Committee will conduct an oversight hearing to examine the organizations that are receiving these grants, how VETS is awarding these grants, and how the program can be enhanced at the federal and state levels to place more homeless veterans in ca-

reers. *The Committee's oversight is crucial as the Committee continues to work with VA and ensure the number of homeless veterans continues to decrease.*

- **Performance of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program—**The Jobs for Veterans State Grant program is administered by VETS and funds the employment of state employees called Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists (DVOP) and Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER). This program is dedicated to placing veterans in good-paying jobs. Significant issues surround this program's inconsistent performance across the states, and the outcome measures used to determine performance continue to be inadequate. The Committee will continue to review this program and the performance outcomes of DVOPs and LVERs and conduct oversight of the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI), which trains DVOPs and LVERs on job placement and training skills for veterans.

- **Homeless Veterans—**The Committee will continue oversight of how COVID-19 has impacted the services and programs that VA grantees provide to homeless veterans and those veterans who are at risk for homelessness. The Committee will also review VA efforts to permanently house homeless veterans and ensure that those veterans are receiving the wrap-around services they need. The Committee will also ensure that if a veteran leaves permanent housing, VA will work with the veteran to address their needs and rehouse them as quickly as possible. In addition, the Committee will ensure that VA is accurately counting those veterans who have been housed and don't leave housing. The Committee will examine the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) programs, and VA's progress toward reducing veteran homelessness. The Committee will also address the myriad of factors underlying veteran homelessness. The Committee will continue to oversee VA's integration efforts to support vulnerable veterans by facilitating access to benefits, care, and services. Finally, the Committee will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of temporary measures passed in response to the pandemic to support employment and homelessness programs at the VA that are serving more individuals due to COVID-19.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

- **Authorizations of Medical Programs—**The Secretary vests in the Undersecretary for Health the authority and responsibility for medical services, community care, medical support and compliance, and facility maintenance and construction programs under the authority of 38 U.S. Code, chapters 17, 73, 74, 75, 76, 81 and 82. Except for major medical construction projects and certain leases, annual authorization by the Committee is not required. P.L. 117-168, the *Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022*, Title VII, modified the congressional process by which major medical facility leases are authorized, granted VA authority to enter into agreements with academic affiliates and other entities to acquire space for the purpose of providing healthcare resources to veterans, modified the requirements for VA's enhanced-use lease authority, and provided permanent authority for joint leasing actions between DoD and VA. Addi-

tionally, Title 38 includes certain multiple-year authorizations for specific purposes. The Committee routinely examines the programs that have expiring authorities or sunset dates. As part of P.L. 117–180, the *Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023*, numerous health programs were reauthorized through FY 2024. In this same legislation, VA and DoD were authorized to continue the joint incentives program related to healthcare resources through FY 2026.

- **Community Care**—The Committee remains concerned about inconsistent VA referral practices and veterans’ ability to utilize community care when in their best interest. Eligibility for care in the community is determined in part by designated access standards, as mandated by the *VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION) Act of 2018*. The Committee will closely monitor any adjustments made to access standard definitions. The Committee will conduct oversight of the VA’s reorganized Integrated Veteran Care (IVC) office established to supposedly create a seamless system for coordinating VA’s direct and community care delivery systems. Even as the Community Care Networks have stabilized and matured, concerns still remain about network adequacy and continuity of care. The Committee will continue to monitor veterans’ access to care and VA’s processes for monitoring the performance of the third-party administrators to build networks of community providers and process payments to these providers. VA’s administratively burdensome appointment scheduling process needs reform, and the Committee will continue to conduct oversight to ensure VA improves its administrative efficiency and network adequacy in the U.S. territories, with particular emphasis on the highly remote islands within the Pacific region. In addition, the Committee will monitor VA’s efforts to provide veterans greater insight into both VA and community care appointment wait times and availability, so veterans can make informed decisions about where best to seek care. Finally, the Committee will continue to monitor the baseline funding to the Medical Community Care account to ensure funds are being used most appropriately.

- **Market Assessments and Infrastructure Modernization**—The Committee will continue aggressive oversight of VA’s major medical facility construction and leasing program and consider needed actions to address VA’s vast and aging capital asset portfolio. The Committee is especially concerned about the continued maintenance requirements of underutilized facilities and the growing need for an expanded footprint in areas of the country experiencing significant veteran population growth. The *MISSION Act* required VA to conduct market assessments, first to inform recommendations for an Asset and Infrastructure Review Commission and subsequently on a continuing basis as a strategic review. As VA seeks to begin the process of updating market assessments for the strategic review, the Committee will conduct oversight of these assessments to ensure concerns about the underlying methodology are addressed and appropriate stakeholder involvement occurs. The Committee will explore mechanisms to best incorporate these assessments into and reform the VA Strategic Capital Investment Planning (SCIP) process to include better systemic metrics that would require realignment or modernization of certain facilities.

Furthermore, given the changes made to leasing under the PACT Act, the Committee is eager for VA to leverage those modifications and see the impact they will have on veterans' access to care closer to home.

- **Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicide Prevention**—The Committee will continue to closely monitor VA's mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention efforts, particularly its new programs and the effectiveness of existing programs. In 2020, two large veterans' mental health and suicide prevention legislative packages became law (the *Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act* and the *Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment (COMPACT) Act*), necessitating continued implementation oversight. This oversight effort will also include the expanded eligibility for and operational capacity of the Readjustment Counseling Service. The Committee will closely monitor and provide recommendations on VA's use of community providers and organizations to deliver mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention services to veterans, when VA cannot provide these services directly and when at-risk veterans are outside VA's reach. Given ongoing issues with timely veteran suicide data collection, analysis, and reporting from VA, the Committee also will work with VA and stakeholders to evaluate VA's use and dissemination of best practices in real-time veteran suicide surveillance. The Committee also will examine VA's substance use and addiction treatment capacity and programming, with a focus on access and complications of overlapping mental health issues.

- **Staffing, Recruitment, and Retention**—The Committee will closely examine VA's staffing, recruitment, and retention programs and take action to correct deficiencies within VA's overly bureaucratic and lengthy hiring processes that hinder VA's ability to efficiently and effectively recruit and retain high-quality employees to treat veteran patients. VHA continues to suffer from limited human resources capacity and weak internal control practices, both of which have undermined VA's ability to improve the delivery of care to veteran patients. Recent HR modernization efforts that centralized hiring authority away from the facilities and into the Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISNs) and Central Office has exacerbated an already burdensome process. The Committee will assess how VA identifies staffing needs at the local level, prioritizes recruitment and retention in high-need areas, and addresses existing staffing shortages. In addition, the Committee will examine if and how the significant increase in the total number of VA employees over the last several years has led to improvements in care and benefits for the veterans VA serves. Finally, as part of the *Honoring our PACT Act of 2022*, Congress provided significant authorities and resources to enhance human resources management. The Committee will closely monitor the implementation as well as the outcomes and impacts of these initiatives.

- **Pain and Medication Management, Complementary and Integrative Health**—The Committee will examine the extent to which VA is appropriately using prescription medications to treat veterans experiencing acute and chronic pain, and the extent to which veterans are offered and able to access complimentary and integrative therapies for pain management. The effective management of

pain is a critical issue for the veteran population as data suggests that veterans are a particularly high-risk population for prescription misuse, substance use disorder, accidental overdose, accidents, and/or self-inflicted injury. The Committee will scrutinize VA's opioid safety initiative, substance use treatment programs, and access to alternative chronic and acute pain treatments. The Committee will also review VA's policies concerning veteran access to substance use inpatient treatment programs as well as assess the use and efficacy of complementary and integrative health treatments and techniques for veterans with pain or other conditions.

- **Long-Term Services and Supports**—The Committee will continue to assess VA's broad array of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) to determine whether veterans have access to the methods of care delivery that best suit their needs. VA has historically relied primarily upon a network of institution-based services consisting of VA Community Living Centers (CLCs), State Veterans Homes (SVHs), and contracted community nursing homes; however, VA must do more to develop a robust network of home and community-based services (HCBS) to meet the growing demand, and preference, for non-institutional care among its aging veteran population. The Committee will monitor VA's progress in this area and continue supporting authorities in allowing greater access to HCBS. Given the growing numbers of women veterans utilizing VA services, the Committee will review the availability and adequacy of LTSS specific to this population. The Committee will also examine VA's role in monitoring the quality of care and patient safety at SVHs, and VA's role in supporting the cost of care for veteran residents, along with SVH construction, renovation, and maintenance.

- **Caregivers**—Following the expansion of the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) in October 2022 to all era veterans and their caregivers, the Committee will closely monitor VA's implementation of the numerous changes made to the program through regulation, as VA attempts to standardize the program. The Committee is concerned about the management of "legacy" program participants and will continue to monitor the evolution of benefits provided to this cohort. The Committee is also concerned about the focus on this program and the lack of coordination in providing access to other, possibly more appropriate, long-term-care options. The Committee has been encouraged by reports of success with the Veteran-Directed Home and Community Based Services and will continue to examine the availability of geriatric home health programs that rely on and support critical aspects of family caregiver support.

- **Telehealth**—The Committee will continue to assess the effectiveness of VA's telehealth programs. Telehealth is an increasingly important tool for improving access to care for veteran patients. The Committee is concerned about a potential overreliance on telehealth and potential impact on access metrics and veteran preference. The Committee will assess VA's efforts to provide timely and accessible care to veterans in rural and hard-to-reach areas through tools like telehealth, community partnerships, and other means.

- **Quality Care**—OIG, GAO, and media reports continue to document patient harm incidents within VHA medical facilities. These

have called into question whether VHA leadership is carrying out all their credentialing, privileging, and quality management responsibilities. Specifically, the Committee is concerned about whether VHA and its VISNs are doing enough to ensure that their medical facilities are appropriately screening clinicians prior to hire, monitoring providers' clinical competence while they are employed, conducting timely investigations when concerns arise, and reporting serious concerns about provider performance to the National Practitioner Data Bank and state licensing boards, as required by VHA's own policy. The Committee is encouraged by the embrace of High Reliability Organization principles by many VA Medical Centers and are heartened by employee engagement in identifying "near misses" and potential quality of care/patient safety concerns.

- **Eligibility for Care in the VA Healthcare System**—In 1996, Congress created the current VA enrollment priority group system. Veteran eligibility for VA care has been minimally changed since then, despite the fact that military service, the veteran population, the delivery of care, and the VA healthcare system have changed significantly. Many of the most pressing issues facing veterans today concern eligibility. The Committee will examine the appropriateness of the current eligibility system for today's veteran population, particularly those with character of discharge concerns, to ensure that all veterans can receive the care that they need.

- **Continued Support for Women Veterans**—The over two-million women who have served in the U.S. military comprise the fastest-growing veteran subpopulation within VA. Over 600,000 women veterans are currently enrolled for VA healthcare, and utilization of services continues to expand. In 2020, Congress passed the *Deborah Sampson Act*, a compilation of comprehensive legislation focusing on women veterans. The Committee must continue its close implementation oversight of this Act as well as new or enhanced services recently made available to women veterans. The Committee's examination of issues impacting women veterans will include, but is not limited to: ensuring a welcoming and inclusive VA, free from sexual harassment and assault; providing equitable access to VA healthcare, with well-resourced access to gender-specific care, such as mammography, gynecology, and obstetrics; research into the impacts of military service on women veterans' physical and mental health; and a greater focus on the special needs of aging women veterans, to include unique health conditions, long-term care, and caregiving.

- **VA Research**—The Committee will aggressively oversee the totality of VA's medical and prosthetic research program to identify and eliminate redundancies and ensure the dissemination of best practices and a veteran-centric research focus. VA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) conducts an extensive research program that is tasked with conducting research to advance the healthcare provided by VA and to the nation. VA's Health Services Research and Development Service also operates 19 Centers of Innovation (COIN), built off the work of prior Centers of Excellence, that conduct research on specific issues concerning veteran patients. The Committee will continue to oversee opportunities for innovation, cutting-edge technology, veteran participation in clinical trials, and greater use and support of the Million Veteran Program

data for public health research. Use of this data will also require continued oversight to ensure that utilization of veterans' data is protected and secure.

- **Emergency Care**—In 1999, the *Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act* (commonly known as the “Mill Bill”) established criteria to govern VA’s reimbursement of costs related to emergency care provided to veterans in non-VA facilities for non service-connected conditions. Those criteria are outdated and increasingly complicated for veterans, VA staff, and emergency care providers outside of the VA healthcare system to understand and administer, which has led to a backlog of emergency care claims and resulted in costly judicial proceedings. The Committee will work to simplify and modernize these criteria to ensure the appropriate provision of care to veterans in crisis and timely and appropriate reimbursements to emergency care providers in the community.

- **VA’s Fourth Mission and Participation in the National Disaster Medical System**—VA’s Fourth Mission, to assist federal and civilian partners in the event of an emergency, received relatively little attention before the pandemic. This role has proven critical as the American healthcare system endured the catastrophic impact of COVID-19, while at the same time, rural hospitals and clinics continued to close at an alarming rate. The current process for VA to pursue a “Fourth Mission” is overly bureaucratic, requiring the approval of multiple federal agencies. Congress must reconsider the current structure of the disaster response framework to reflect the sheer scale of VHA’s potential. VA has shown to be a locally based leader in medical support response in the event of natural disasters. The Committee is committed to ensuring this capability remains a VA core competency. Additionally, the Committee will review potential partnerships with the Indian Health Service and Public Health Service, as well as support the recruitment of deployable nursing personnel to staff the mobile medical units VHA already possesses.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

- **Budget and Waste**—VA funding has doubled over the last decade, and staffing has increased by over 40 percent. The Committee will conduct oversight of waste, particularly in contracts, redundancies, and offices that produce no value, as part of a broader assessment of whether the VA’s rate of growth has exceeded veteran demand, whether new initiatives merit investment, and how to implement a framework for reducing inefficiencies in underperforming areas.

- **VA Supply Chain**—During the early days of the COVID 19 pandemic, supply chains around the globe failed. Today, VA’s medical supply chain is operational, but VA’s efforts to create a more resilient supply chain have been unsuccessful. The Committee will conduct oversight of the Executive Branch’s effort to bring medical supply inventory for crisis response under the Department of Health and Human Services and VA’s role in that effort. The Committee will also ensure VA is following existing statutory requirements for medical supplies made in America.

- **Accountable Workforce**—Holding more than 400,000 staff accountable has proven difficult for VA. VA’s Office of Accountability

and Whistleblower Protection (OAWP) has failed to deliver robust discipline of senior executives and managers, and rulings by the courts and the Merit Systems Protection Board have limited the Secretary's authority to hold employees accountable for poor performance or misconduct under 38 U.S. Code § 714. The Committee will conduct oversight of OAWP, to make sure VA whistleblowers are protected from retaliation while holding their superiors accountable. The Committee will also determine where laws can be reinforced to manifest a responsible workforce dedicated to VA's mission.

- **Oversight of Contractors**—VA's annual contract spending has reached more than \$38 billion, and there are nearly as many VA support contractors as federal employees in many offices. Additionally, VA received billions in COVID 19 emergency appropriations. The Committee believes that a culture of overreliance on contractors, revolving door influence, and failed projects with big paydays has taken hold. The Committee, in concert with budget analysis and bureaucratic reforms, will aggressively investigate the reasons for the proliferation of contractors, the effectiveness of the massive contractor workforce, and whether the value gained matches the dollars spent.

- **Addressing Violent Crime**—From fiscal year 2018 to fiscal year 2021, violent crime rates on VA campuses increased significantly. The Committee will continue oversight of the VA Police Force and violent crime rate, to drive process improvements and protect the health and safety of veterans and VA employees.

- **Department of Defense-VA Agreements**—DoD (principally the Defense Logistics Agency) and VA have executed numerous agreements, partnerships, and funding arrangements. VA typically pays DoD to utilize its systems, services, or contracts. Our oversight will evaluate the effectiveness and return on investment of these arrangements.

- **Human Resources**—VA has centralized its human resources functions at the Central Office and VISNs. In an effort to create uniformity, VA has hamstrung local VA directors trying to fill vacancies, has slowed down the onboarding process significantly, and increased staff frustration with human resources. The Committee will examine this decision and analyze the impacts to local VA facilities and veterans.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION

- **Enterprise Technology Modernization Programs**—The Committee will continue overseeing the effectiveness of VA's major programs and projects to modernize technology and business operations.

- **Electronic Health Record Modernization**—The Oracle Cerner electronic health record system is now live at five sites, significantly impairing their operations. The 2021 strategic review substantiated the technical flaws but failed to address most of them directly, and VA has again paused additional implementations through June 2023. An independent cost estimate forecasts implementation costs at nearly \$39 billion over 13 years, up from \$16 billion over 10 years. We oppose further implementations until the system is significantly improved and the five sites currently using it have normalized, and we have

begun engaging with VA and Oracle Cerner on the status of individual technical improvements.

- Digital G.I. Bill—The Digital G.I. Bill’s initial results are encouraging, and we are closely monitoring how much automation can ultimately be accomplished and how key legacy systems will be phased out.

- VBA Systems and Disability Compensation Automation—VBA has initiated automation pilots at a handful of Regional Offices, targeting a handful of categories of claims. Most are limited to assistive tools or job aids. Our oversight will focus on advancing automation to eliminate repetitive tasks and enhance employees’ effectiveness, while always preserving human decision-making. Relatedly, the Veterans Benefits Management System and other key VBA systems must be modernized in a way that completely eliminates siloed, legacy systems and is compatible with the automation strategy.

- Financial Management Business Transformation—VA has been implementing its new financial system for more than four years and has completed NCA and several components of VBA. The system’s cost estimate is rising, and its viability remains unproven until VHA medical centers adopt it. Several hurdles and long overdue decisions threaten the program’s success, particularly which inventory management system to interface with and how to create that interface. The Committee believes the Financial Management Business Transformation program is worthwhile and can succeed, though this is not assured, and our oversight focuses on clearing these roadblocks.

- Human Capital Modernization—VA is preparing to replace its human resources management software, which its publisher will no longer support, and add new capabilities. This project’s scope is uncertain, and its cost and schedule are unknown. The Committee’s oversight aims to clarify these key questions before the VA proceeds and determine whether and how this system’s design will align with the human resources organizational centralization.

- Supply Chain Management Modernization—VA will soon purchase a new supply chain management system after abandoning an effort to implement the Department of Defense’s Defense Medical Logistics Standards Support (DMLSS) system. This project’s scope appears to be excessively large and ambitious, increasing risk. The Committee’s oversight focuses on determining whether VA adequately understands its own requirements and has clearly expressed and prioritized them. This project’s cost and schedule also remain unknown.

- Authorizations of Enterprise Technology Modernization Programs—Within memory, Congress has not authorized any of VA’s enterprise technology modernization programs, or any other specific IT programs. The Secretary vests in the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology (Chief Information Officer) with the responsibility for “information management functions” under the authority of 38 U.S. Code 308(b)(5). Additionally, the Chief Information Officer is designated under 38 U.S. Code 310. Both sections reference 44 U.S. Code 3506, which lays out the general Chief Information Officer responsibilities that are common across agencies. VA presumably carries out its IT programs under these or-

ganic authorities. The Committee will individually consider authorizing each new or proposed enterprise technology modernization program. During the 117th Congress, Committee members introduced H.R. 2420, the *Overseeing the GI Bill Act of 2021* to authorize the Digital G.I. Bill program and H.R. 9091, the *VA Supply Chain Management System Authorization Act* to authorize the forthcoming Supply Chain Management Modernization program. Neither bill was enacted. However, last Congress, the *Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Reform Act of 2022* (Section 403 of the *Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2022*) was enacted. This legislation requires VA to report the estimated costs, schedules, and performance objectives of each major IT project (defined as having life cycle costs exceeding \$1 billion) before commencing them. The Committee intends to use this mechanism to vet each such new project for authorization. Specifically, the Committee will either authorize or reject the Supply Chain Modernization and Human Capital Modernization projects.

- **Appointment Scheduling Technology**—The Committee will be closely monitoring VA’s progress in modernizing systems used by appointment schedulers and will ensure VA is providing veterans greater ability to directly self-schedule appointments, as well as view expected wait times for in-house vs. community care appointments.

- **Information Technology and Office of Information & Technology**—Sixteen years after VA IT activities were centralized in the Office of Information & Technology (OIT), the office still struggles to meet the Department’s rapidly growing IT needs. After conducting a deep dive into OIT’s budget last Congress, the Committee concluded that it is not structured in a way that accurately represents OIT’s activities or needs. Successive reorganizations have not resolved unclear or overlapping lines of responsibility, persistent customer complaints, and inconsistent management practices. Nonetheless, OIT has made some progress introducing reusable technology platforms, migrating applications to the cloud, and making available low-code/no-code development tools to its customers. The Committee’s oversight of OIT will focus on aligning its structure, budget, and processes to support VA’s needs better.

- **Cybersecurity**—VA struggles to clear multiple repeat findings in the annual Federal Information Security Modernization Act audit, the annual financial statement audit, and OIG inspections. OIT’s cybersecurity approach appears to focus on continuous monitoring and detection, but vulnerabilities abound due to inconsistent management and policy implementation. The Committee’s oversight focuses on making cybersecurity practices more consistent across VA, identifying new vulnerabilities caused by digitizing formerly manually processes, integration with other agencies, and keeping unapproved IT and medical devices off VA networks. The Committee will also continue to probe VA’s inability to identify what is on their networks at facilities and push to ensure that shadow IT is identified, and if possible, mitigated with enterprise solutions.

- **Data Management and Privacy**—Veterans’ data must be protected from loss, theft, and monetization. The Committee’s oversight will examine the agreements and safeguards VA has in place

with its technology vendors and partners, those vendors and partners' practices, and VA's track record of monitoring their activities and enforcing the safeguards. The Committee will also oversee errors by VA employees that expose veterans' protected data to loss, theft, or monetization.

MANDATORY SPENDING

In accordance with clause 2(d)(2)(E) of Rule X, the Committee will work to limit unintended consequences of the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund, section 805 of P.L. 117–168, the *Honoring our PACT Act of 2022*. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the Toxic Exposures Fund now encompasses programs or activities funded by the following accounts: Medical Community Care, Medical Support and Compliance, Medical Services, Medical and Prosthetic Research, Veterans Electronic Health Care Record, General Operating Expenses (VBA), General Administration, Information Technology, and Board of Veterans Appeals. Therefore, portions of these accounts which had been entirely discretionary may now become partially mandatory, and any legislation creating or modifying programs or activities funded by these accounts will receive a mandatory score. The Committee will continue to oversee the use of the Fund by VA to ensure that it supports PACT Act implementation, and the care of veterans exposed to toxic substances. The Committee will also continue to engage with the Budget and Appropriations Committees to assess the long-term impacts of the Fund and resolve any impediments to the Committee's ability to carry out its legislative responsibilities.

ACTIVITIES OF THE FULL COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Full Committee Business Meeting—Organization of the 118th Congress. On February 8, 2023, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs met to formally organize the Committee's membership and to adopt the rules of the Committee for the 118th Congress.

Full Committee Business Meeting—Committee's Authorization and Oversight Plan. On February 28, 2023, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs met to consider the Committee's authorization and oversight plan for the 118th Congress.

Full Committee Business Meeting—Committee's Authorization of the Women Veteran Task Force. On March 23, 2023, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs met to consider the Committee's authorization of the Women Veteran Task Force.

Full Committee Business Meeting—Committee's Consideration to Authorize a Subpoena. On January 11, 2024, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs met to consider a resolution to authorize a subpoena to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the production of documents and communications.

Full Committee Business Meeting—Committee's Consideration to Authorize a Subpoena and Democratic membership of the subcommittees. On September 10, 2024, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs met to consider a resolution to authorize a subpoena to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the production

of documents and communications; and to authorize Democratic membership of Rep. Timothy Kennedy of the subcommittees of the Full Committee.

MARKUPS

Full Committee Markup. On April 28, 2023, the Full Committee held a markup on an amendment in the nature of a substitute to the H.R. 1669, VET-TEC Authorization Act; H.R. 562, Improving Veterans Access to Congressional Services Act of 2023; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1089, VA Medical Center Facility Transparency Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1530, Veterans Benefits Improvement Act; H.R. 1529, Veterans' Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act; H.R. 1256, Veterans Health Administration Leadership Transformation Act; and H.R. 366, Korean American VALOR Act. H.R. 1529 and H.R. 366 were ordered reported to the House, without amendment. H.R. 1669, H.R. 562, H.R. 1089, H.R. 1530, and H.R. 1256 were ordered reported to the House, as amended.

Full Committee Markup. On July 26, 2023, the Full Committee held a markup on an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3848, HOME Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3943, Servicemember Employment Protection Act of 2023; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3874, Veterans Education Assistance Improvement Act; H.R. 3933, TAP Promotion Act; H.R. 4278, Restore Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 4461, Modernizing Department of Veteran Affairs Disability Benefit Questionnaires Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3581, COPE Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1767, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide that educational assistance paid under Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance programs to an individual who pursued a program or course of education that was suspending or terminated for certain reasons shall not be charged against the entitlement of the individual, and for other purposes; H.R. 3981, Veterans Education Oversight Expansion Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 542, Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023; and an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 984, Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act. H.R. 3848, H.R. 3943, H.R. 3874, H.R. 4278, H.R. 4461, H.R. 3581, H.R. 1767, H.R. 3981, H.R. 542, and H.R. 984 were ordered reported to the House, as amended. H.R. 3933 was ordered reported to the House, without amendment.

The following groups submitted a letter of support: Joint Unions and Multi-VSOs.

Full Committee Markup. On December 5, 2023, the Full Committee held a markup on an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 522, Deliver for Veterans Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3738, To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 5914, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processes to approve programs of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Af-

fairs, and for other purposes; H.R. 3722, as amended, Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act; H.R. 5938, as amended, Veterans Exam Expansion Act of 2023; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1753, To ensure that certain members of the Armed Forces who served in female cultural support teams receive proper credit for such service; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 5890, Review Every Veterans Claim Act of 2023; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 5785, To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the requirements of the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3790, Justice for ALS Veterans Act of 2023; H.R. 4016, Veteran Fraud Reimbursement; and H.R. 4190, as amended, Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act. H.R. 522, H.R. 3738, H.R. 5914, H.R. 3722, H.R. 5938, H.R. 1753, H.R. 5890, H.R. 5785, and H.R. 3790 were ordered reported to the House, as amended. H.R. 4016 and H.R. 4190 were ordered reported to the House, without amendment.

Full Committee Markup. On May 1, 2024, the Full Committee held a markup on an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 7323, Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserves Tuition Fairness Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 7643, Veterans Congressional Work Study Act of 2024; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 705, Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 5870, Veteran Appeals Transparency Act of 2024; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 7816, Clear Communications for Veterans Claims Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 7150, Survivor Benefits Delivery Improvement Act of 2024; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 7734, Personnel Integrity in Veterans Affairs Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 6452, Veterans Scam and Fraud Evasion Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 6874, VA WEB Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 7342, Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act; H.R. 6538, VA Correct Compensation Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 6531, TRAIN VA Employees Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 4424, Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 2499, VA Supply Chain Management System Authorization Act; an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 6324, FY24 VA Major Medical Facility Authorization Act; Lease Resolutions; H.R. 7653, Veterans Employment Readiness Yield (VERY) Act of 2024; H.R. 7100, Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act; H.R. 7777, Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024; H.R. 2911, Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2023; H.R. 7347, To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report on whether the Secretary will include certain psychedelic drugs in the formulary of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and H.R. 5794, VA Peer Review Neutrality Act. H.R. 7323, H.R. 7643, H.R. 705, H.R. 5870, H.R. 7816, H.R. 7150, H.R. 7734, H.R. 6452, H.R. 6874, H.R. 7342, H.R. 6531, H.R. 4424, H.R. 2499, and H.R. 6324, were ordered reported to the House, as amended. H.R. 6538, H.R. 7653, H.R. 7100, H.R. 7777, H.R. 2911, H.R. 7347, H.R. 5794, and the

Lease Resolutions, were ordered reported to the House, without amendment.

The following groups submitted letters of support: Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., The American Legion, Senior Executives Association, American Federation of Government Employees, AFL CIO, and Disabled American Veterans.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

Full Committee Hearing—“Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Bipartisan Member Day Hearing”

On June 22, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to receive testimony from Members of Congress on legislation and veterans’ issues within the Committee’s jurisdiction for the 118th Congress.

There were three witness panels. The following Members testified on the first panel: Representative Derek Kilmer (Washington); Representative Pat Ryan (New York); and Representative Keith Self (Texas).

The following Members testified on the second panel: Representative Kim Schrier (Washington); Representative Jasmine Crockett (Texas); and Representative Lou Correa (California).

The following Members testified on the third panel: Representative Rudy Yakym (Indiana); Representative Abigail Spanberger (Virginia); Representative Eric Sorensen (Illinois); Representative Delia Ramirez (Illinois); and Representative Jack Bergman (Michigan).

The following members submitted statements for the record: Representative Marilyn Strickland (Washington), Representative Marcy Kaptur (Ohio), Representative Brad Wenstrup (Ohio), and Representative Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (Washington).

Full Committee Legislative Hearing—“H.R. 705 and Discussion Draft: Ernest Peltz Accrued Veterans Benefits Act”

On July 18, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on H.R. 705, the “Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act” and a Discussion Draft: Ernest Peltz Accrued Veterans Benefits Act”. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Ron Burke, Deputy Under Secretary, Policy & Oversight, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Kevin Friel, Deputy Director, Pension & Fiduciary Services, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Dave Barrans, Chief Counsel, Benefits Law Group, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Jeffrey Swanson, PhD, Professor in Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Duke University School of Medicine; Mr. Bob “Shoebob” Carey, Captain, US Navy (Ret), Chairman and Chief Bottle Washer, National Defense Committee; Mr. Cole Lyle, Executive Director, Mission Roll Call; and Ms. Kristina Keenan, Deputy Director for National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Full Committee Legislative Hearing—“H.R. 7738, Toxic Exposure Fund Improvement Act of 2024”

On March 21, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on H.R. 7738, “Toxic Exposure Fund Improvement Act of 2024”. The following witnesses testified: The Honorable Jon Rychalski, Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Lasheeco Graham, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Full Committee Hearing—“Building an Accountable VA: Applying Lessons Learned to Drive Future Success”

On February 28, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the consequences of disengaged leadership, the implementation and state of major U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs, and how Congressional oversight would hold VA accountable to improve care and benefits for veterans.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Michael Missal, Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the Honorable Gene Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States, Government Accountability Office; the Honorable Shereef Elnahal, M.D., Under Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Michael Frueh, Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and the Honorable Matthew Quinn, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statement for the record: Concerned Veterans of America, American Federation of Government Employees, AFL–CIO, America’s Warrior Partnership, and Student Veterans of America.

Full Committee Hearing—“Joint House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs Hearing to receive the Legislative Presentation of the Disabled American Veterans”

On February 28, 2023, the Full Committee held a joint hearing with the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee to receive the legislative priorities of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), who presented their legislative priorities to the House and Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committees for fiscal year 2023.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses from DAV testified: Mr. Joseph Parsetich, National Commander; Mr. J. Marc Burgess, National Adjutant; Mr. Barry Jesinoski, Executive Director, National Headquarters; Mr. Edward R. Reese, Jr., Executive Director, Washington Headquarters; Mr. Jim Marszalek, DAV National Service Director; Ms. Joy Ilem, DAV National Legislative Director; Mr. John Kleindienst, National Director of Voluntary Service; Mr. Ryan Burgos, National Employment Director; and Ms. Darlene Spence, Auxiliary Commander.

Full Committee Hearing—“Joint House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs Hearing to receive the Legislative Presentation of The American Legion and Multi-VSOs”

On March 1, 2023, the Full Committee held a joint hearing with the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee to receive the legislative priorities of The American Legion (TAL) and Multi VSOs: Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Student Veterans of America (SVA), Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA), Black Veterans Empowerment Council (BVEC), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Fleet Reserve Association (FRA), National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), and National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), who presented their legislative priorities to the House and Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committees for 2023.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses from TAL testified on the first panel: Mr. Vincent J. Troiola, National Commander; Mr. Chanin Nuntavong, National Executive Director; Mr. Lawrence Montreuil, Legislative Director; Mr. James La Coursiere, Chairman of the Legislative Commission; Mr. Autrey James, Chairman of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission; Mr. Jay Bowen, Chairman of the Veterans Employment and Education Commission; and Mr. Joe Sharpe, Director of Veterans Employment and Education.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Charlie Brown, National President, PVA; Mr. Jared Lyon, National President & Chief Executive Officer, SVA; Mr. Jeremy Butler, Chief Executive Officer, IAVA; Mr. James S. Hartsell, President, NASDVA; Mr. Shawn L. Deadwiler, Interim Director, BVEC; Mr. Jack McManus, National President, VVA; Mr. Christopher J. Slawinski, National Executive Director, FRA; Ms. Angela Pratt, Co-Chair, Veterans Committee, NCAI; and Brig. Gen. J. Roy Robinson (Ret.), President, NGAUS.

Full Committee Hearing—“Joint House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs Hearing to receive the Legislative Presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and Multi-VSOs”

On March 8, 2023, the Full Committee held a joint hearing with the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee to receive the legislative priorities of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and Multi VSOs: Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. (JWV), Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), American Veterans (AMVETS), Gold Star Wives of America, Inc., Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), and National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO), who presented their legislative priorities to the House and Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committees for fiscal year 2022.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses from the VFW testified on the first panel: Mr. Timothy Borland, Commander-in-Chief; Mr. Ryan Gallucci, Executive Director of the VFW Washington Office; Mr. Patrick Murray, National Legislative Direc-

tor; Mr. Michael Figlioli, National Service Director; and Ms. Deborah Johnson, Legislative Committee Chair.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Col. Nelson Mellitz, USAF (Ret.), JWV; LTG Michael S. Linnington, USA (Ret.), WWP; Ms. Bonnie Carroll, President and Founder, TAPS; Mr. Cory Titus, Director of Veteran Benefits and Guard/Reserve Affairs, Government Relations, MOAA; Mr. Donald McLean, National Commander, AMVETS; Ms. Tamra Sipes, President, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.; Mr. Christopher Vedvick, National Commander, MOPH; Mr. Joseph D. McNeil, Sr., National President, BVA; and Mr. Michael McLaughlin, Legislative Chairman, NACVSO.

Full Committee Hearing—“U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025”

On March 23, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ fiscal years 2024 and 2025 budget request. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs requested \$325.1 billion for fiscal year 2024, which was an increase of \$16.6 billion (5.4 percent) over fiscal year 2023. The Committee examined VA’s discretionary and mandatory budget requests and the increase in the Toxic Exposure Fund.

The Honorable Denis. R. McDonough, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs testified before the Committee.

Full Committee Hearing—“COVID-19 Supplemental Funding: Did it Protect and Improve Veteran Care?”

On May 23, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine how the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs spent the roughly \$36.7 billion in combined supplemental appropriations they received in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. The Committee questioned whether VA used the funding effectively to protect and improve veteran care.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. John Rychalski, Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert McDivitt, Network Director, VISN 23, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; The Honorable Michael Missal, Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Whitney Bell, President, National Association of State Veterans Homes.

The following group submitted a statement for the record: National Coalition for Homeless Veterans.

Full Committee Hearing—“VA Electronic Health Record Modernization: Get Well Soon?”

On September 14, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the five VA medical centers and their associated clinics in Washington, Oregon, and Ohio that have implemented the Oracle Cerner electronic health

record (EHR) system. The Committee considered whether the facilities have returned to normal productivity and operating levels, what resources or changes are needed, and how efforts progressed to attain those levels.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Dr. Neil Evans, M.D., Acting Program Executive Director, Electronic Health Record Modernization Integration Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Scott Kelter, Director, Jonathan M. Wainwright (Walla Walla, Washington) VA Medical Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Robert Fischer, M.D., Director, Mann-Grandstaff (Spokane, Washington) VA Medical Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Thandiwe Nelson-Brooks, Associate Director, Roseburg, Oregon VA Medical Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Meredith A. Arensman, M.D., Chief of Staff, Chalmers P. Wylie (Columbus, Ohio) VA Ambulatory Care Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following individual submitted a statement for the record: Ms. Teresa D. Boyd, D.O.

Full Committee Hearing—“Veterans Serving Veterans: The Impact of America’s Businesses on Veteran Employment and Opportunity”

On November 7, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to highlight and recognize the significant contributions of veterans to American businesses and the economy. The Committee also highlighted businesses that focus on creating employment opportunities for veterans and military spouses as well as small businesses that have been established by veterans. The Committee examined ways to improve outreach to veterans during the transition process and discussed ways to reduce any barriers to veteran employment and the creation of veteran-owned small businesses.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Tommy Jones, Senior Director, Military and Veteran Affairs, Walmart; Mr. Eric Eversole, President, Hiring Our Heroes; Mr. Michael McCoy, Veteran Recruitment, Verizon; and Ms. Erin Izen, Senior Director, Workforce Programs, Home Depot.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Joe Gelardi, President and Chief Executive Officer, Vectrona, LLC; and Mr. Chris Maynor, Owner, Daniel Deans.

Full Committee Hearing—“Rural Access: Is VA Meeting All Veterans Where They Live?”

On January 11, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs’ efforts to provide access to healthcare and benefits to veterans in rural areas. Specifically, the Committee considered: the role of the Office of Rural Health; the provision and efficacy of rural telehealth; rural veteran homelessness and the adequacy of grant and per diem rates for homeless veterans; access to healthcare providers; challenges accessing compensation and pension exams; and the use of mobile health units.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: The Honorable Shereef Elnahal, Under Sec-

retary for Health, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; The Honorable Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. John Boerstler, Chief Veterans Experience Officer, Veterans Experience Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Alyssa Hundrup, Director, Health Care, U.S. Government Accountability Office.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Buu Nygren, President, The Navajo Nation; Mr. Jon Lovald, Chief Operating Officer, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans; Ms. Marisa Schultz, Illinois Veterans; and Dr. Mark Holmes, Director, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research and North Carolina Rural Health Research Center, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology, Alzheimer's Impact Movement, American Nurses Association, American Society of Anesthesiologists, ATA Action, Center for Healthcare Quality & Payment Reform, Neuroflow, Leidos QTC Health Services, U.S. Vets Prescott, and Western Governors Association.

Full Committee Hearing—"The One Percent: Supporting America's Surviving Military Family Community"

On January 30, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine gaps in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' outreach to survivors concerning benefits, processing of survivors' compensation claims, delivery of education benefits, and provision of health care, including physical and mental health, for survivors.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: The Honorable Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Kevin Friel, Deputy Director, Pension and Fiduciary Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Mark Upton, Deputy to the Deputy Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Kaanan Mackey-Fugler, Surviving Spouse of Matthew Mackey; Ms. Gabriella Kubinyi, Surviving Spouse of Jeffrey Ferren, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Ms. Ashlynn Haycock-Lohmann, Deputy Director, Government and Legislative Affairs, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; and Ms. Kelly B. Hruska, Government Relations Director, National Military Family Association.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Ms. Laura LeHigh, Disabled Veterans of America, Fleet Reserve Association, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Full Committee Hearing—"VA's HR Office: Did Leaders Ignore and Perpetuate Sexual Harassment?"

On February 14, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine sexual harassment and misconduct allegations within the Office of Resolution Management, Diversity & Inclusion (ORMDI), an office under the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration/Operations,

Security and Preparedness (HRA/OSP). Chairman Bost wrote to the VA making the Secretary aware of these allegations. The Committee's investigation focused on the information VA was compelled to produce under the January 12th subpoena, and during the hearing, the Committee examined when VA leaders first became aware of these allegations and what they did about them.

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: The Honorable Denis McDonough, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Cassandra Law, Assistant Secretary, Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Bruce Gipe, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses were invited to the second panel but did not show up to testify: Mr. Archie Davis, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Gary Richardson, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Gina Grosso; and Mr. Harvey Johnson.

Full Committee Hearing—"Joint House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs Hearing to receive the Legislative Presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States & Multi-VSOs"

On March 6, 2024, the Full Committee held a joint hearing with the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee to receive the legislative priorities of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and Multi-VSOs: Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA), Mission Roll Call (MRC), Blue Star Families (BSF), Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), Student Veterans of America (SVA), and American Veterans (AMVETS).

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses from VFW testified on the first panel: Mr. Duane Sarmiento, Commander-in-Chief; Mr. Ryan Gallucci, Executive Director of the VFW Washington Office; Mr. Patrick Murray, National Legislative Director; Mr. Michael Figlioli, National Service Director; and Mr. Stanley Borusiewicz, Legislative Committee Chairman.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Robert Thomas, National President, PVA; LTG Michael S. Linnington, USA (Retired), Chief Executive Officer, WWP; Mr. Dennis Wimer, President, NASDVA; Mr. Jim Whaley, Chief Executive Officer, MRC; Ms. Kathy Roth-Douquet, Chief Executive Officer, BSF; Ms. Allison Jaslow, Chief Executive Officer, IAVA; Mr. Paul Mimms, National President, BVA; Colonel Lorry M. Fenner, USAF (Retired), SWAN; Mr. Jared Lyon, National President & Chief Executive Officer, SVA; and Mr. William "Bill" Clark, National Commander, AMVETS.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Military Order of the Purple Heart, Quality of Life Foundation, and Representative Deila Ramirez (Illinois).

Full Committee Hearing—“Joint House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs Hearing to receive the Legislative Presentation of the Disabled American Veterans”

On March 7, 2024, the Full Committee held a joint hearing with the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee to receive the legislative priorities of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses from DAV testified: Ms. Nancy Espinosa, National Commander; Mr. Barry Jesinoski, National Adjutant; Mr. Bryan “Cody” Van Boxel, Executive Director, National Headquarters; Mr. Edward R. Reese, Jr., Executive Director, Washington Headquarters; Mr. Jim Marszalek, DAV National Service Director; Ms. Joy Ilem, DAV National Legislative Director; Mr. John Kleindienst, National Director of Voluntary Service; Mr. Ryan Burgos, National Employment Director; and Ms. AnnMarie Hurley, Auxiliary National Commander.

Full Committee Hearing—“Joint House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs Hearing to receive the Legislative Presentation of The American Legion & Multi-VSOs”

On March 13, 2024, the Full Committee held a joint hearing with the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee to receive the legislative priorities of The American Legion (TAL) and Multi-VSOs: Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. (JWV), Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV), Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO), National Coalition of American Indians (NCAI), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), and Fleet Reserve Association (FRA).

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses from TAL testified on the first panel: Mr. Daniel J. Seehafer, National Commander; Mr. Chanin Nuntavong, National Executive Director; Ms. Patricia Harris, Chairwoman, Legislative Commission; Ms. Julia Mathis, Director, Legislative Division; Mr. Autrey James, Chairman, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission; Ms. Tiffany Ellet, Director, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division; Mr. John Bowen, Chairman, Veterans Employment & Education Commission; and Mr. Joe Sharpe, Director, Veterans Employment & Education Division.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: COL Barry Lischinsky, USA, Retired, National Commander, JWV; Ms. Rebecca Harrison Mullaney, Surviving Spouse of Army Captain Ian Morrison, TAPS; Ms. Kathryn Monet, Chief Executive Officer, NCHV; Commander René Campos, USN, Retired, Senior Director of Government Relations for Veterans Wounded Warrior Care, MOAA; Mr. Michael McLaughlin, Legislative Director, NASDVA; Mr. Melvin Sheldon, Jr., Alternate Vice President—Northwest Region, NCAI; Mr. Jack McManus, National President, VVA; Major General Frank McGinn, Retired, NGAUS; and Mr. John S. Handzuk, National President, FRA.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Mr. Jose D. Acevedo, American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society, Black Veterans Empowerment Council Inc., Gold Star Wives of America, Inc., D’Aniello Institute for Veterans &

Military Families, Military-Veterans Advocacy, MinorityVets, Modern Military Association of America, Reserve Organization of America, and Veterans Education Success.

Full Committee Hearing—“U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026”

On April 11, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to consider President Biden’s budget request for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal years 2025 and 2026. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs requested \$369.3 billion for fiscal year 2025, which is a \$41.8 billion increase (22 percent) over FY 2024 in mandatory spending and a \$8.9 billion decrease (6 percent) compared to FY 2024 discretionary spending.

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: The Honorable Denis McDonough, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Roscoe Butler, Senior Health Policy Advisor, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; and Mr. Patrick Murray, National Legislative Service Director, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Full Committee Hearing—“Bonus Blunder: Examining VA’s Improper Decision to Award Senior Executives Millions in Incentives”

On June 4, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) report detailing its investigation into critical skill incentive (CSI) bonuses made to nearly every career senior executive service (SES) employee in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA).

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: The Honorable Michael J. Missal, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witness testified on the second panel: The Honorable Denis R. McDonough, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Full Committee Hearing—“A Call to Action: Meeting the Needs of the Paralyzed Veteran Community”

On June 13, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to discuss the unique challenges veterans living with Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders (SCI/D) face by examining the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) patient safety practices, the current and future infrastructure of VA medical facilities, health care staffing needs, and the accessibility of medical care and transportation for SCI/D veterans. The hearing also examined the accessibility of contract exam facilities for veterans’ disability compensation exams, the ability of VA’s Veterans Readiness and Employment Program to assist SCI/D veterans, and the support VA provides through their Specially Adapted Housing Grant Program to assist SCI/D veterans in modifying their homes to meet their accessibility needs.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Erica Scavella, Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Jeffrey London, Executive Director, Medical Disability Examination Office, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Steve Bracci, Director, Claims and Medical Exams Benefits Inspection Division, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Robert Thomas, National President and Chairman of the Board, Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA); Mr. Carl Blake, Chief Executive Officer, PVA; Ms. Sonya Sotak, Chief Government Affairs Officer, I AM ALS; and Dr. Jenny Kiratli, Member, American Federation of Government Employees.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Elliott Mitochondria Research Center, Neuralink, and the Reeve Foundation.

Full Committee Hearing—“Accountable of Absent? Examining VA Leadership Under the Biden-Harris Administration”

On September 10, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine where accountability is lacking within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which was found through committee oversight travel, investigations, and whistleblower discussions. Members had the opportunity to pose questions to VA’s Inspector General, the Under Secretary for Health, and the Under Secretary for Benefits to examine how VA leaders would take accountability for their own conduct and address substantiated and alleged misconduct.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: The Honorable Dr. Shereef Elnahal, Under Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; The Honorable Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Edward J. Murray, Acting Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and The Honorable Michael J. Missal, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Concerned Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

Full Committee Hearing—“Everyday Heroes: Supporting the Veteran Caregiver Community”

On September 25, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the comprehensive challenges faced by veteran caregivers. Veterans’ caregivers play an essential role in supporting veterans’ health and well-being. These caregivers, often family members, friends, or close acquaintances, provide a wide range of services. These services include assistance with basic activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, and eating; and managing complex medical needs, administering medications, and providing emotional and mental health support.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Colleen Richardson, Psy.D., Executive Director, Caregiver Support Program, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Rajeev Ramchand, Senior Behavioral Scientists and Codirector, RAND Epstein Family Veterans Research Institute; Mr. Steve Schwab, CEO, Elizabeth Dole Foundation; Ms. Vanessa Chism, Elizabeth Dole Caregiver Fellow; Mr. Troy Broussard, State Director, AARP; and Mr. Jonathon Pruden, Special Advisor to the Chief of Staff—Warrior Care, Wounded Warrior Project.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Blue Star Families, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Quality of Life Foundation.

Full Committee Hearing—“Fact and Fiction: Getting to the Bottom of the VA Budget Shortfall”

On December 5, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the circumstances surrounding the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) purported fiscal year (FY) 2024 benefits budget shortfall and FY 2025 health care budget shortfall.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Shereef Elnahal, M.D., Under Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the Honorable Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Lasheeco Graham, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following group submitted a statement for the record: Multi-VSOs.

Full Committee Hearing—“Restoring Congressional Power over VA After Loper Bright Enterprises vs. Raimondo”

On December 18, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine how the recent Supreme Court decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* will affect current and future Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regulatory decisions. The hearing explored how Congress and VA can effectively operate to serve veterans in a post-Loper environment.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Philip Wallach, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute; Mr. Chad Squitieri, Assistant Professor of Law, Columbus School of Law, Catholic University of America; Mr. John Vecchione, Senior Litigation Counsel, New Civil Liberties Alliance; and Mr. Jonathan Gaffney, Supervisory Attorney, Congressional Research Service.

SITE VISITS

Northern Illinois and Northwestern Indiana. From May 26 through May 30, 2023, Ranking Member Takano and minority staff

conducted an oversight trip to Northern Illinois and Northwestern Indiana. Ranking Member Takano and minority staff participated in the Boot Camp graduation at Naval Station Great Lakes on May 26, 2023. Afterward, Ranking Member Takano and minority staff visited the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC), where they met with Lovell FHCC leadership and discussed the unique organizational structure of the facility. Ranking Member Takano and minority staff also toured the “USS Red Rover,” the medical-dental facility where incoming Navy recruits receive in-processing medical exams, immunizations, and primary care. The trip also included a visit to Sheridan National Cemetery and Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. Ranking Member Takano attended a veterans town hall and toured the Hines VA Medical Center with Rep. Lauren Underwood; and attended Memorial Day events in Indiana with Rep. Frank Mrvan. Ranking Member Takano was joined by Rep. Delia Ramirez for a visit to the Veterans Benefits Administration’s Chicago Regional Office, where they and minority staff met with managers and staff to discuss implementation of the PACT Act and how the new law has impacted employees, workload, and hiring. Finally, Ranking Member Takano and minority staff visited the Laurent House in Rockford, Illinois, which hosted a celebration of the 75th anniversary of VA’s Specially Adapted Housing Program.

France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy. From June 23 to July 1, 2023, Chairman Bost led a bipartisan congressional delegation (CODEL) to France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy. The delegation included Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks (IA-03), Representative Derrick Van Orden (WI-03), Representative Scott Franklin (FL-18), Representative Amata Radewagen (American Samoa-At Large), and Representative Mark Takano (CA-39). Five majority staff members and two minority staff members accompanied them. The trip’s purpose was to oversee American Battle Monument sites, examine American Armed Forces cemeteries, tour the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and Naval Support Activity Naples, and discuss the Transition Assistance Program with armed services personnel.

Virginia Beach, Virginia. From July 20 to 21, 2023, Chairman Bost and majority committee staff visited Virginia Beach, Virginia. During this trip, Chairman Bost was accompanied by Rep. Jen Kiggans as they toured ECPI University to gain insight into the skills that student veterans are developing before entering the workforce. Additionally, Chairman Bost and Rep. Kiggans held a roundtable discussion with over 40 veterans and veterans’ organizations to understand better the healthcare, education, and benefits needs in the Virginia Beach area.

Dayton, Ohio. On August 1, 2023, Chairman Bost and majority committee staff visited Dayton, Ohio. During this trip, Chairman Bost was accompanied by Rep. Mike Turner as they toured the Dayton National Cemetery and conducted an oversight visit. National Cemetery Administration (NCA) employees briefed them on the construction plans for the cemetery’s expansion, which will extend behind historical buildings and run adjacent to a parking lot. Concerns were raised regarding the NCA’s need for collaboration with the community about these expansion plans.

Loma Linda, California. On August 8, 2023, Ranking Member Takano and minority staff accompanied Dr. Shereef Elnahal, VA's Under Secretary for Health, on a visit to the VA Loma Linda Health Care system. Together, they met with leadership from Veterans Integrated Service Network 22 and the medical center, local union leaders, and clinical staff leading research on MDMA-assisted psychotherapy for veterans with combat-related PTSD. In addition, they discussed with local leaders the facility's progress in improving primary care access at the medical center and its outpatient clinics and toured some clinical spaces. Finally, the Ranking Member and the Under Secretary held two town halls with VA Loma Linda Health Care System employees and a roundtable with veterans.

Japan, Guam, Wake, and Hawaii. From April 20 to April 28, 2024, Chairman Bost and Chairman Graves led a bipartisan led a bipartisan congressional delegation (CODEL) to Japan, Guam, Wake, and Hawaii. The delegation included Ranking Member Takano (CA-39), Representative Sauld Carbajal (CA-24), Representative Mark DeSaulnier (CA-10), Representative Troy Nehls (TX-22), Representative David Rouzer (NC-07), and Representative Barry Moore (AL-02). Nine majority staff members and one minority staff member accompanied them. The trip's purpose was to conduct a fact-finding visit to Japan, Guam, Wake Island, and Hawaii. The delegation met with local government officials to discuss U.S. operations and strategic interests in the region and reaffirm the U.S. commitment to our Pacific allies in the INDOPACOM region.

In addition, the delegation examined transportation and infrastructure projects, particularly high-speed rail, along with the associated challenges and solutions. They also examined U.S. cemeteries where veterans of various wars and conflicts are buried, both domestically and internationally, as well as War Monuments in the area. Furthermore, the delegation visited veterans' hospitals, medical care, and the unique issues related to veterans in the region.

Oregon. On June 16, 2024, the majority staff director conducted a site visit of the Portland Oregon VA Medical Center along with Rep. Chavez DeRemer and staff. The purpose of this visit was to tour the facility and meet with staff to learn about the issues facing the veterans of the Pacific Northwest. The staff found that while the care being provided by the staff of the facility was adequate, there was concern about them purposely directing veterans to not use care in the community. The staff also participated in veterans townhall in Bend, Oregon hosted by Rep. Chavez DeRemer.

Colorado and New Mexico. From July 14 to 20, 2024, Ranking Member Takano and minority staff visited several sites in Colorado and New Mexico. Ranking Member Takano and Committee staff were joined by Rep. Jason Crow for a tour of the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center in Aurora, CO. This visit included discussion with interim Medical Center leadership. Ranking Member Takano attended veterans' town halls with Rep. Yadira Caraveo, Rep. Brittany Petterson, Rep. Melanie Stansbury, and Rep. Gabe Vasquez. The delegation also visited the Colorado Springs Vet Center and PFC Floyd K. Lindstrom VA Clinic in Colorado Springs. Also near Colorado Springs, there were meetings at the Air Force Academy and the Peterson Space Force Base to discuss service-

member transition. Additionally, oversight visits were conducted at the Pueblo, Raton, and Taos VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics to gain a better understanding of rural healthcare needs in Colorado and New Mexico. The trip concluded with a visit to the New Mexico Veterans Affairs Health Care System in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Minneapolis, Minnesota. On August 2, 2024, Ranking Member Takano and minority staff visited the Minneapolis VA Medical Center and conducted a listening session with VA employees. They also met with leadership and staff from the facility's "Close to Me" cancer care program and VA's Tele-Critical Care hub, which is based in Minneapolis. In addition, Ranking Member Takano participated in a PACT Act roundtable discussion with invited members of the local congressional delegation, state and local elected officials, veterans service organizations, and veterans. Finally, Ranking Member Takano and staff visited a home that is part of the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans' (MACV) permanent supportive housing program. MACV is a nonprofit organization working to end veteran homelessness in Minnesota.

Omaha, Nebraska. On October 16, 2024, the majority staff director conducted a site visit to Omaha, Nebraska. Following a town hall with Rep. Don Bacon and local veterans, staff met with the leadership of the University of Nebraska Medical Center. During this visit staff toured the medical school's facilities and had a detailed conversation about the potential to having VA partner with the University on a new medical center.

California. From October 14 to 17, 2024, Chairman Bost and majority committee staff visited several locations in California. During this trip, Chairman Bost was accompanied by Rep. Ken Calvert as they toured Desert Arc: Opportunities for People with Disabilities. This organization supports individuals with disabilities, including veterans and their families, in Palm Desert, CA. Additionally, Chairman Bost and Representative Calvert held a roundtable discussion with over 40 veterans and veterans' groups to understand better the healthcare needs in both rural and urban areas of Palm Springs, CA.

Tucson, Arizona. From October 17 to 19, 2024, Chairman Bost and majority committee staff visited several locations in Tucson, Arizona, accompanied by Rep. Juan Ciscomani. Chairman Bost and Rep. Ciscomani held a roundtable discussion with over 20 veterans and veterans' groups to gain insight into the healthcare, economic opportunities, and homelessness challenges veterans face in Tucson's rural and urban areas. Additionally, Chairman Bost and Rep. Ciscomani toured the Healing AZ Veterans clinic to learn about Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) and its application in treating veteran PTSD and traumatic brain injuries (TBI). They also attended a Cochise County Veteran Stand Down to understand better the needs of homeless veterans and how the VA is addressing those needs within the community. Lastly, they visited Cochise College to explore the skill sets that student veterans are obtaining before entering the workforce.

Lancaster, California. On October 28, 2024, the majority staff director conducted a site visit to the site of the new VA Outpatient clinic in Lancaster, CA. The clinic is under construction and is ex-

pected to be completed in the fall of 2025. Staff also participated in in a roundtable and a townhall with Rep. Mike Garcia.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS

MORGAN LUTRELL, Texas, *Chair*

CHRIS PAPPAS, New Hampshire, *Ranking Member*

SCOTT FRANKLIN, Florida

JUAN CISCOMANI, Arizona

ELI CRANE, Arizona

KEITH SELF, Texas

MORGAN MCGARVEY, Kentucky

DELIA RAMIREZ, Illinois

GREG LANDSMAN, Ohio²

JENNY J. TANG, *Majority Staff Director*
GARY WOODWARD, *Minority Staff Director*

²On June 3, 2024, Representative Chris Deluzio resigned his position on the Subcommittee on Disability and Memorial Affairs, and on September 10, 2024, Representative Greg Landsman joined the Subcommittee.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

MARKUPS

Subcommittee Markup. On April 19, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 234, Gerald's Law Act; H.R. 984, Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act; H.R. 1329, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for an increase in the maximum number of judges who may be appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; H.R. 1378, Veterans Appeals Backlog Improvement Act; H.R. 1529, Veterans' Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act; and H.R. 1530, Veterans Benefits Improvement Act. H.R. 1529 was ordered reported to Full Committee by voice vote, without amendment. H.R. 234, H.R. 1329, H.R. 1378, H.R. 1530, and H.R. 984 were ordered reported to Full Committee by voice vote, as amended.

Subcommittee Markup. On November 29, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 1753, To ensure that certain members of the Armed Forces who served in female cultural support teams receive proper credit for such service; H.R. 3790, Justice for ALS Veterans Act of 2023; H.R. 4016, Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act; H.R. 4190, Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act; H.R. 4306, Michael Lecik Military Firefighters Protection Act; H.R. 5559, Protecting Veterans Claim Options Act; H.R. 5891, Veteran Appeals Decision Clarity Act; H.R. 5870, Veteran Appeals Transparency Act of 2023; H.R. 5890, Review Every Veterans Claim Act of 2023; and H.R. 5938, Veterans Exam Expansion Act of 2023. H.R. 4016, and H.R. 5890 were order reported to Full Committee by voice vote, without amendment. H.R. 3790, H.R. 5938, H.R. 4190, H.R. 5559, H.R. 5870, H.R. 5891, H.R. 1753, and H.R. 4306 were ordered reported to Full Committee by voice vote, as amended.

Subcommittee Markup. On April 16, 2024, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 1083, Caring for Survivors Act of 2023; H.R. 2911, Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2023; H.R. 3651, Love Lies On Act of 2023; H.R. 7100, Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act; H.R. 7150, Survivor Benefits Delivery Improvement Act of 2024; H.R. 7777, Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024; H.R. 7793, Veterans Appeals Options Expansion Act of 2024; H.R. 7816, Clear Communications for Veterans Claims Act; H.R. 7883, Toxic Exposures Examination Improvement Act; H.R. 7917, Veterans Appeals Efficiency Act of 2024; and H.R. 7919, Veterans Claims Quality Improvement Act of 2024. H.R. 2911 and H.R. 7816 were ordered reported to Full Committee by voice vote, as amended. H.R. 1083, H.R. 3651, H.R. 7100, H.R. 7150, H.R. 7777, H.R. 7793, H.R. 7883, H.R. 7917, and H.R. 7919 were ordered reported to Full Committee by voice vote, without amendment.

Subcommittee Markup. On July 23, 2024, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 2971, Veterans Claims Education Act of 2023; H.R. 6362, Protecting Benefits for Disabled Veterans Act of 2023; H.R. 8792, Flowers for Fallen Heroes Act of 2024; H.R. 8874, Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act; H.R. 8879, Improving VA Training for Military Sexual Trauma Claims Act; H.R. 8880, Simplifying Forms for Veterans Claims Act; H.R.

8881, Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2024; H.R. 8893, Preserving Veterans' Legacy Act; H.R. 8910, Dayton National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2024; H.R. 9053, Veterans 2nd Amendment Restoration Act; H.R. 9054, Safeguarding Veterans 2nd Amendment Rights Act; H.R. 9057, Gulf War Survivor Benefits Update Act of 2024; H.R. 9055, Veterans' Burial Improvement Act of 2024; and H.R. 9056, VA Insurance Improvement Act. H.R. 2971, H.R. 6362, H.R. 8792, H.R. 8874, H.R. 8879, H.R. 8879, H.R. 8880, H.R. 8881, H.R. 8910, H.R. 9053, H.R. 9054, H.R. 9057, H.R. 9055, and H.R. 9056 were ordered reported to Full Committee by voice vote, without amendment. H.R. 8893 was ordered reported to Full Committee by voice vote, as amended.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—"Legislative hearing on H.R. 234, Gerald's Law Act; H.R. 854, Captain James C. Edge Gold Star Spouse Equity Act; H.R. 984, Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act; H.R. 1139, GUARD VA Benefits Act; H.R. 1329, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for an increase in the maximum number of judges who may be appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; H.R. 1378, Veterans' Appeals Backlog Improvement Act; H.R. 1529, Veterans' Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2023; and H.R. 1530, Veterans Benefits Improvement Act."

On March 29, 2023, the Subcommittee met in an open session to conduct a legislative hearing to discuss the above legislation.

There were three witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Representative Morgan Luttrell (Texas); Representative Chris Pappas (New Hampshire); Representative Juan Ciscomani (Arizona); Representative Mike Levin (California); Representative Keith Self (Texas); and Representative Jack Bergman (Michigan).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Cheryl Rawls, Executive Director, Outreach, Transition and Economic Development, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Kevin Friel, Deputy Director, Pension & Fiduciary Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Christa Schriber, Deputy Chief Counsel, Benefits Law Group, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the third panel: Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Lawrence Montreuil, Legislative Director, The American Legion; Ms. Kristina Keenan, Deputy Director for National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; and Lieutenant Colonel William Taylor (USA) Ret., Co-Founder & Chief Operating Officer, Veterans Guardian VA Claim Consulting, LLC.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Gold Star Wives of America, National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, Inc., Rep. Michael Waltz, Special Operations Association of

America, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, and U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 1753, To ensure that certain members of the Armed Forces who served in female cultural support teams receive proper credit for such service; H.R. 3790, Justice for ALS Veterans Act of 2023; H.R. 4016, Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act; H.R. 4190, Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act; H.R. 4306, Michael Lecik Military Firefighters Protection Act; H.R. 5559, Protecting Veterans Claim Options Act; H.R. 5891, Veteran Appeals Decision Clarity Act; H.R. 5870, Veteran Appeals Transparency Act of 2023; H.R. 5890, Review Every Veterans Claim Act of 2023; and H.R. 5938, Veterans Exam Expansion Act of 2023.”

On November 8, 2023, the Subcommittee met in an open session to conduct a legislative hearing to discuss several bills.

There were three witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Representative Morgan Luttrell (Texas); Chairman Mike Bost (Illinois); Representative Elissa Slotkin (Michigan); Representative Juan Ciscomani (Arizona); Representative Abigail Davis Spanberger (Virginia); Representative Keith Self (Texas); Representative David J. Trone (Maryland); and Representative Darrell Issa (California).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Beth Murphy, Executive Director, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Kevin Friel, Deputy Director, Pension & Fiduciary Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Kenneth Arnold, Vice Chairman, Board of Veterans' Appeals, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the third panel: Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Director, Disabled American Veterans; Ms. Quandra N. Patterson, Associate Director, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; and Mr. Zachary M. Stolz, Partner, Chisholm, Chisholm & Kilpatrick LTD.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: ALS Association, AmVets, Rep. Gerald Connolly, Paralyzed Veterans of America, National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, Inc., Leidos QTC, Special Operations Association of America, and Service Women's Action Network.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 1083, Caring for Survivors Act of 2023; H.R. 2911, Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2023; H.R. 3651, Love Lives On Act of 2023; H.R. 7100, Prioritizing Veterans’ Survivors Act; H.R. 7150, Survivor Benefits Delivery Improvement Act of 2024; H.R. 7777, Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024; H.R. 7793, Veterans Appeals Options Expansion Act of 2024; H.R. 7816, Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act; H.R. 7883, Toxic Exposures Examination Improvement Act; H.R. 7917, Veterans Appeals Efficiency Act of 2024; H.R. 7919, Veterans Claims Quality Improvement Act of 2024; and Discussion Draft, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve matters relating to medical examinations for veterans disability compensation, and for other purposes.”

On April 10, 2024, the Subcommittee met in an open session to conduct a legislative hearing to discuss several bills.

There were three witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Representative Keith Self (Texas); Representative John Duarte (California); and Representative Jahana Hayes (Connecticut).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Colonel Tiffany M. Wagner, Clerk of the Court, U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; Mr. Daniel T. Shedd, Legislative Attorney, American Law Division, Congressional Research Service; The Honorable Jaime Areizaga-Soto, Chairman, Board of Veterans’ Appeals, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Brianne Ogilvie, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary, Office of Policy and Oversight, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Jessica Pierce, Assistant Director, Compensation Service Policy Staff, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the third panel: Ms. Candace Wheeler, Director, Government and Legislative Affairs, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS); Mr. Christopher Macinkowicz, Deputy Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW); Mr. Andrew Tangen, First Vice President, National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO); and Ms. Renee Burbank, Director of Litigation, National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP).

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Administrative Conference of the United States, The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, National Organization of Veterans’ Advocates, Inc., Paralyzed Veterans of America, Representative Dean Phillips (Minnesota), Representative Marilyn Strickland, and Mr. Michael J. Wishnie.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 2971, Veterans Claims Education Act of 2023; H.R. 6362, Protecting Benefits for Disabled Veterans Act of 2023; H.R. 6507, Mark Our Place Act; H.R. 7729, Dennis and Lois Krisfalusy Act; H.R. 8792, Flowers for Fallen Heroes Act of 2024; H.R. 8854, Ensuring Veterans’ Final Resting Place Act of 2024; H.R. 8910, Dayton National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2024; H.R. 8893, Preserving Veterans’ Legacy Act of 2024; H.R. 8874, Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act; H.R. 8881, Rural Veterans’ Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2024; H.R. 8879, Improving VA Training for Military Sexual Trauma Claims Act; H.R. 8880, Simplifying Forms for Veterans Claims Act; Discussion Draft, Veterans 2nd Amendment Restoration Act; Discussion Draft, Safeguarding Veterans 2nd Amendment Rights Act; Discussion Draft, Board of Veterans Appeals’ Attorney Retention and Backlog Reduction Act; Discussion Draft, Veterans’ Burial Improvement Act; Discussion Draft, VA Insurance Improvement Act; and Discussion Draft, Survivor Benefits Update Act.”

On July 10, 2024, the Subcommittee met in an open session to conduct a legislative hearing to discuss several bills.

There were three witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Representative Ryan Zinke (Montana); Representative Rudy Yakym III (Indiana); and Representative John Duarte (California).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: the Honorable Charles K. Djou, Secretary & Chief Executive, American Battle Monuments Commission; Mr. Glenn Powers, Deputy Undersecretary, Field Programs and Cemetery Operations, National Cemetery Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Jeffrey London, Executive Director, Medical Disability Examination Office, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Kristina Messenger, Deputy Executive Director of Operations, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Kevin Friel, Deputy Director of Pension & Fiduciary Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the third panel: Ms. Candace Wheeler, Director, Government and Legislative Affairs, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS); Ms. Lesley Witter, Senior Vice President, Advocacy, National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA); Mr. Bob “Shoebob” Carey, Captain, US Navy (Ret), Director, Chief Bottle Washer, National Defense Committee; Mr. Robert M. “Bob” Holliday, Gold Star son of Captain Karl O. “Hap” Holliday; and Mr. Nicholas Keogh, 2nd Vice President, Local 17, American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE).

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Center on Education and the Workforce—Georgetown University, Disabled American Veterans, Healthcare Leadership Council, National Association of Counties, Rep. Young Kim (California), Rep. Morgan McGarvey (Kentucky), Rep. Maxine Waters (California), Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., and Mr. James Vollman.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Reviewing VA’s implementation of the PACT Act”

On May 16, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing examining the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) delivery of disability compensation benefits under P.L. 117–168: the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (PACT Act). The purpose of the hearing was to examine the VA’s progress deploying information technology needed to process PACT Act claims; timelines for hiring and training new claims processors; provision of training and guidance on processing PACT Act claims; accuracy of claims decisions; and progress reducing the inventory of pending disability compensation claims.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: the Honorable Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Patricia Hastings, Chief Consultant, Health Outcomes and Military Exposures, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Robert Orifici, Director of the Benefits and Memorial Services Portfolio, Office of Technology Modernization, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Michael T. Black, National Service Director, American Veterans (AMVETS); Colonel Lorry M. Fenner (USAF Retired), Director of Government Relations, Service Women’s Action Network; and Mr. Aleks Morosky, Government Affairs Deputy Director, Wounded Warrior Project.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., Disabled American Veterans, and American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO.

Joint Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“From Months to Hours: The Future of VA Benefits Claims Processing”

On June 6, 2023, the Subcommittees on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and Technology Modernization met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) plans, and progress so far, to modernize the information technology systems used to process disability compensation claims. Specifically, the Subcommittees reviewed VA’s 5-year Modernization Plan of Benefits Delivery Information Technology Systems, which was required in the PACT Act.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Raymond Tellez, Acting Assistant Deputy Under Secretary, Automated Benefits Delivery, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Orifici, Director, Benefits and Memorial Systems Portfolio, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. David Bump, National Representative for National Veterans Affairs Council, Second Vice President for Veterans Benefits Administration at Local 2157, Portland, Oregon, American Federation of Government Employees.

The following group submitted a statement for the record: Foundation for American Innovation.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Disability Exams: Are Veterans Receiving Quality Services?”

On July 27, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to review the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) oversight of disability exams conducted by contractors as well as Veterans Health Administration medical examiners. Other hearing topics included: exam scheduling, information technology systems for exams, examiner training, addressing underperforming examiners, and the sufficiency of VA’s process to determine the quality, timeliness, and veteran satisfaction of disability exams. The Subcommittee also examined the VA’s progress implementing the recommendations from several U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Jeffrey London, Executive Director, Medical Disability Examination Office, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jacqueline Imboden, Assistant Director, Procedures & Interagency/MilPay, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Christopher Parker, Associate Executive Director, Office of Acquisitions, Logistics and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Henry Bridges, Senior Medical Officer for the Office of Disability and Medical Assessment, (VHA/11CS–DMA), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Elizabeth Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and Mr. Stephen Bracci, Director, Claims and Medical Exams Inspection Division, Office of Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Federation of Government Employees, AFL–CIO, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Maximus, National Organization of Veterans’ Advocates, Inc., Optum Serve Health Services, and Leidos QTC.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA’s Fiduciary Program: Ensuring Veterans’ Benefits are Properly Managed”

On September 28, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to review the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) fiduciary program to examine the process by which fiduciaries are appointed, including how VA deems an individual or entity as qualified to manage a veteran’s benefits; the process by which VA monitors and removes fiduciaries; and, fraud and misuse associated with the program.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Kevin Friel, Deputy Director, Pension & Fiduciary Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Liza Van Haeren, Director, Claims and Fiduciary Division, Office of Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Disabled American Veterans and Paralyzed Veterans of America

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Examining the VA Appeals Process: Ensuring High Quality Decision-Making for Veterans’ Claims on Appeal”

On November 29, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the quality of actions by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Board of Veterans’ Appeals (Board), including Board determinations of whether a Notice of Disagreement has initiated an appeal, Board remands of cases to the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) for further action or development, and Board decisions on veterans’ claims for VA benefits. The hearing also examined the extent to which the VBA uses data from Board remands to inform its quality assurance and training programs, as well as the extent to which the Board uses data from orders by the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to inform its quality assurance and training programs.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Ms. Elizabeth Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, U.S. Government Accountability Office; Mr. Kenneth A. Arnold, Vice Chairman, Board of Veterans’ Appeals, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Mary Ann (Merri) Flynn, Chief Counsel, CAVC Litigation Group, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Timothy Sirhal, Executive Director, Office of Administrative Review, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Ms. Diane Boyd Rauber, Executive Director, National Organization of Veterans’ Advocates, Inc.; Mr. Michael S. Figlioli, Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; Mr. Zachary M. Stolz, Partner, Chisholm, Chisholm & Kilpatrick LTD; and Mr. Douglas E. Massey, President, Local 17, American Federation of Government Employees.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Bergmann & Moore, LLC and U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Is VA Illegally Spending Taxpayer Dollars in its Compensation and Pension Programs?”

On February 14, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) financial management policies and practices, specifically including whether VA effectively uses dollars that Congress appropriates for veterans’ disability compensation and pension benefits, the extent to which VA has issued improper payments, and whether VA is entirely transparent about the overpayments it has issued.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Ronald S. Burke Jr., Deputy Under Secretary for Policy and

Oversight, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Lasheeco Graham, Chief Financial Officer, Office of Financial Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Brent E. Arronte, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Dana Sullivan, Director of Claims and Appeals, Office of Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Lost in Translation: How VA’s Disability Claims and Appeals Letters Should be Simplified”

On March 20, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine whether the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability claims and appeals notice letters to veterans and their families are understandable and contain the information veterans need to effectively navigate the claims process for VA disability compensation benefits in a timely manner.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Ms. Beth Murphy, Executive Director, Compensation Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Caroline Fleming, Veterans Law Judge, Board of Veterans’ Appeals, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Denise Kitts, Executive Director, Enterprise Measurement and Design, Veterans Experience Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Brian Griffin, Deputy Chief Counsel, Benefits Law Group, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans (DAV); Ms. Diane Boyd Rauber, Executive Director, National Organization of Veterans’ Advocates, Inc. (NOVA); and Mr. Michael S. Figlioli, Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW).

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Does a Total Disability Rating Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU) Properly Compensate Today’s Veterans?”

On June 12, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine whether the TDIU benefit properly compensates veterans who are unable to secure and maintain substantially gainful employment as a result of their service-connected disability or disabilities, including whether the current TDIU benefit is an accurate representation of the average totally impaired veteran’s earning capacity in today’s civil occupational environment. The Subcommittee also examined the current criteria for entitlement to TDIU and the extent to which the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ occupational training and counseling helps veterans obtain substantially gainful employment.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Ronald S. Burke Jr., Deputy Under Secretary, Office of Policy & Oversight, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nick Pamperin, Ex-

ecutive Director, Veteran Readiness and Employment Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. David J. Barrans, Chief Counsel, Benefits Law Group, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Marquis Barefield, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans (DAV); Mr. Michael S. Figlioli, Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW); and Mr. Michael Stoddard, National Service Director, Benefits Services, Wounded Warrior Project (WWP).

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Center on Education and the Workforce—Georgetown University, National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, Inc., Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Mr. James Vollman.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—"Examining Shortcomings with VA's National Work Queue Veterans Benefits Claims Management System"

On June 26, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the National Work Queue (NWQ), including whether VA's national and regional office (RO) rules for workload management allows VA employees to learn from their mistakes. The hearing also examined the NWQ's distribution of certain types of claims to ROs assigned to process those claims, including whether backlogs result from mismanagement of special mission ROs.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Willie Clark, Deputy Under Secretary, Field Operations, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Ken Smith, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary, Operations Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Herman Breuer, Policy Director, National Association of County Veterans Services Officers (NACVSO); Ms. Ashlynn Haycock-Lohmann, Deputy Director, Government and Legislative Affairs, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS); and Mr. James R. Swartz, President, Local 2823, American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE).

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—"Is the Veterans Benefits Administration Properly Processing and Deciding Veterans Claims?"

On July 23, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the efficacy of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA) quality assurance and training programs, including whether VBA's training program is effective for ensuring accurate decisions on veterans' and survivors' claims, and whether VBA's quality data gathering methodology accurately reflects whether VBA is properly processing and deciding veterans' and survivors' claims.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Ronald S. Burke, Jr., Deputy Under Secretary, Office of Policy & Oversight, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department

of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Kenneth Smith, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary, Operations Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Kristina Messenger, Deputy Executive Director of Operations, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Stephen Bracci, Director, Compensation Programs Inspection Division, Office of Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General (OIG), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Elizabeth Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security, Government Accountability Office (GAO); and Ms. Linda Parker-Cooks, President, Local 138, American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE).

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Examining VA’s Challenges with Ensuring Quality Contracted Disability Compensation Examinations”

On September 18, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) policies and processes for overseeing contracted disability compensation exam vendors, including whether VA ensures that exam vendors properly schedule veterans for appropriate exams at appropriate facilities, perform high-quality and legally adequate exams, and comply with VA’s contractual terms and requirements. The hearing also examined whether VA is sufficiently holding exam vendors accountable for mistakes that have a direct impact on veterans and their eligibility for disability compensation benefits.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Ryan M. Gallucci, Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; Mr. Jeffrey London, Executive Director, Medical Disability Examination Office, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Tara Flores, Director, Acquisition Service, Strategic Acquisition Center, Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Elizabeth Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security, Government Accountability Office.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Federation of Government Employees, AFL–CIO, National Organization of Veterans’ Advocates, Inc., Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Our Nation’s Hallowed Grounds: Review of America’s National Cemetery Funeral Operations for Veterans and Servicemembers”

On November 13, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine two overarching topics. First, the hearing examined the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) progress towards ensuring veterans have reasonable access to a burial option within 75 miles of their homes, including VA’s policies and processes for establishing and expanding national cemeteries administered the National Cemetery Administration, including cost estimate procedures and land acquisition procedures;

VA's Veterans Cemetery Grants Program, including VA's policies and processes for awarding grants and for overseeing maintenance of established grant-funded state, tribal, and territory veterans cemeteries; and VA's efforts to modernize its memorial affairs technology. Second, the hearing examined the Department of the Army's (Army's) efforts to resume full and sustainable operations of the Caisson Platoon at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), including Army's progress towards resuming military funerals with caisson support at ANC on behalf of veterans, servicemembers, and their families.

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: Major General Trevor J. Bredenkamp, Commanding General, Joint Task Force—National Capital Region, U.S. Army Military District of Washington.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Ronald E. Walters, Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Richard Chandler, Deputy Under Secretary for Management, National Cemetery Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert J. Orifici, Executive Director, Benefits and Memorial Systems, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Rear Admiral Jon C. Kreitz, U.S. Navy (Retired), Equestrian Expert; Ms. Lesley Witter, Senior Vice President, Advocacy, National Funeral Directors Association; and Mr. Shawn P. Buck, Director, New Hampshire State Veterans Cemetery.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, Inc., Mr. Jose D. Acevedo, J.D., and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

ROUNDTABLES

Subcommittee Roundtable—"VBA Fiduciary Program and NICS Reporting"

On June 1, 2023, the Subcommittee conducted a bipartisan staffed, closed-door, roundtable to discuss the Veterans Benefits Administration's fiduciary program, their reporting to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and H.R. 705, the Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) policy of reporting veterans, who have been appointed a fiduciary to manage their VA benefits, to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS).

In attendance were: Mr. John Kamin, Legislative Associate and Grass Roots Coordinator, The American Legion; Ms. Christian Heyne, Gun Violence Survivor and Vice President, Policy & Programs, Brady United Against Gun Violence; Mr. Mark Collins, Director, Federal Policy, Brady United Against Gun Violence; Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Marquis Barefield, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Rob Wilcox, Federal Legal Director, Everytown for Gun Safety; Mr. Lindsay Nichols, Law Center Policy Director, Giffords; and Ms. Kristina

Keenan, Deputy Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Subcommittee Roundtable—“Exploring a Workable Standard for the Court to Reverse Board Decisions”

On November 15, 2023, the Subcommittee conducted a staff-led, closed-door roundtable. The purpose of this roundtable was for veterans’ advocates to discuss the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims’ (Court’s) reversal standard and explore ideas for a workable standard of judicial review that would allow for more Court reversals of VA Board of Veterans’ Appeals findings or decisions. The roundtable also explored ideas for expanding the Court’s jurisdiction to increase the finality of claims decision, improve upon the Court’s class action authority, and ensure greater consistency of VA decision-making on claims.

In attendance were: Ms. Renée Burbank, Director of Litigation, National Veterans Legal Services Program; Ms. Amy B. Kretkowski, Adjunct Professor of Veterans Benefits Law, University of Iowa College of Law; Mr. Daniel Nagin, Clinical Professor of Law and Faculty Director, WilmerHale Legal Services Center; Mr. Gerald Ray, Administrative Appeals Judge, Deputy Chair of the Appeals Council, and Deputy Executive Director Office of Appellate Operations (retired), Social Security Administration; Mr. James D. Ridgway, Partner, Bergmann & Moore, LLC; Ms. Liza Sawyer, Legal Advisor, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit; Mr. Jonathan R. Siegel, Professor of Law, George Washington University Law School; Ms. Amy F. Odom, Appellate Strategy Coordinator, Chisholm, Chisholm, & Kilpatrick; Ms. Stacey-Rae Simcox, Professor of Law, Director of Veterans Law Institute and Director of Veterans Advocacy Clinic, Stetson University College of Law; and Mr. Michael J. Wishnie, William O. Douglas Clinical Professor of Law, Yale Law School.

Subcommittee Roundtable—“Recommendations to Make VA’s Notice Letters Understandable for Veterans and Survivors”

On May 7, 2024, the Subcommittee conducted a bipartisan, member-led, closed door, roundtable. The purpose of this roundtable was for Members and VA leaders to hear from veterans service organizations on how to make VA’s notice letters understandable for veterans and survivors. These notice letters come from the VA and are sent to veterans and survivors when they file for disability compensation and pension benefits.

In attendance were: Rep. Morgan Luttrell (Texas); Rep. Chris Pappas (New Hampshire); Rep. Delia C. Ramirez (Illinois); Rep. Elijah Crane (Arizona); General Jack Bergman (Michigan); Rep. Keith Self (Texas); Ms. Brianne Ogilvie, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Policy & Oversight, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Beth Murphy, Executive Director, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Caroline Fleming, Veterans Law Judge, Board of Veterans’ Appeals, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Denise Kitts, Executive Director, Enterprise Measurement and Design, Veterans Experience Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs;

Mr. Brian Griffin, Deputy Chief Counsel, Benefits Law Group, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Diane Boyd Rauber, Executive Director, National Organization of Veterans' Advocates; Mr. Jim Marszalek, National Service Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Christopher A. Macinkowicz, Deputy Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mr. Michael S. Figlioli, Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Ms. Renee Burbank, Director of Legislation, National Veterans Legal Service Program; Ms. Ashlynn Haycock-Lohmann, Deputy Director, Government and Legislative Affairs, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Ms. Krista Anderson, Policy Advisor, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Mr. Philip S. Du, Deputy Director of Benefits & Claims, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division, The American Legion; Mr. Jake Corsi, Legislative Associate, The American Legion; Mr. Morgan D. Brown, National legislative Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Mr. Peter Gaytan, Associate Executive Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America; and Ms. Donna Eldridge, Government Relations Committee, Gold Star Wives of America.

Subcommittee Roundtable—"More Recommendations to Make VA's Notice Letters Understandable for Veterans and Survivors"

On June 27, 2024, the Subcommittee conducted a bipartisan staff-led, closed-door, roundtable to obtain an update on VA's efforts to improve notice letters and to further discuss to improve VA notice letters, including the letters VA should prioritize improving to make them more understandable for veterans and survivors.

In attendance were: Mr. Kevin Friel, Deputy Director, Pension and Fiduciary Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Beth Murphy, Executive Director, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Drew Craig, Design Chief, Enterprise Measurement and Design Directorate, Veterans Experience Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jessica Pierce, Assistant Director for Policy, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Diane Boyd Rauber, Executive Director, National Organization of Veterans' Advocates; Mr. Jim Marszalek, National Service Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Marquis Barefield, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Christopher A. Macinkowicz, Deputy Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mr. Michael S. Figlioli, Director, National Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Ms. Alexis Ivory, Senior Staff Attorney, National Veterans Legal Services Program; Ms. Ashlynn Haycock-Lohmann, Deputy Director, Government and Legislative Affairs, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Ms. Candace Wheeler, Director, Government and Legislative Affairs, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Mr. Philip S. Du, Deputy Director of Benefits and Claims, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division, The American Legion; Mr. Jake Corsi, Legislative Associate, The American Legion; Mr. Morgan D.

Brown, National Legislative Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Mr. Peter Gaytan, Associate Executive Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Ms. Donna Eldridge, Co-Chair Government Relations Committee, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc., Ms. Pamela Laurion, Co-Chair Government Relations Committee, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.

SITE VISITS

Columbia, South Carolina. On February 16, 2023, Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and Oversight and Investigations Subcommittees majority and minority staff visited the Columbia Regional Office, Columbia VA Medical Center, and the Women's Clinic. Staff conducted this visit because this is one of the 6 fiduciary hubs across the country. Staff heard from employees about problems in the fiduciary program with the Annual Written Contact Only Program. Staff also heard from regional office employees about how they were unprepared to process PACT Act claims and concerns about the number of errors being made in those claims.

Seattle, Washington & Salt Lake City, Utah. On March 13–16, 2023, Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and Economic Opportunity Subcommittees majority staff attended the VBA Leadership Conference, the Seattle Regional Office, and the Salt Lake City Regional Office. Staff conducted an oversight visit and heard from Regional Office staff about the stress from the implementation of the PACT Act. Staff also heard from fiduciary hub employees about problems that informed a subcommittee oversight hearing later in the year.

Houston, Texas. On May 5, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff accompanied Subcommittee Chairman Luttrell to the Houston Regional Office to hear from employees about their concerns with VA's implementation of the PACT Act. Chairman Luttrell and staff heard concerns about the lack of efficiency in updating the training for PACT Act. Employees also discussed the National Work Queue and how they want more feedback to learn from the errors they are making on veterans' claims.

Dayton, Ohio. On August 2, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff accompanied House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman Bost and Representative Mike Turner on an oversight visit to the Dayton VA Medical Center and the Dayton National Cemetery. Staff were briefed on the current medical research programs ongoing at the Dayton VAMC, the Veterans History Project running at the hospital, and the National Cemetery Administration's current plans to expand the Cemetery.

Indianapolis, Indiana. On September 7, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted an oversight visit to the Indianapolis Regional Office. The purpose of this visit was to hear about issues in this program from fiduciary hub employees to inform a subcommittee oversight hearing held later that year. Employees raised concerns, such as the need for more effective, modernized systems and how tasks are not adequately tracked across multiple systems. The Indianapolis RO was also one of the ROs in charge of processing Military Sexual Trauma (MST) claims, and staff heard from these employees about how MST claims will be processed at one centralized RO going forward.

Washington, District of Columbia. On October 12, 2023, Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and Technology and Modernization Subcommittees majority and minority staff conducted an oversight visit at the VA Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board). Staff heard from Board leadership about concerns with working through their over 200,000 inventory of appeals. Staff received demos of the Board's appeals processing systems and quality assurance methods. Board staff and judges discussed inadequacies in their quality assurance and training programs, which informed a subcommittee oversight hearing later in the year as well as proposed legislation.

New Orleans, Louisiana. On January 26, 2024, Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and Technology and Modernization Subcommittees majority and minority staff visited the New Orleans VBA Regional Office, a prototype site to test automation tools developed for disability compensation claims processing. RO staff acknowledged that accuracy of these tools was improving but reported that claims processing systems as a whole cause delays from frequent crashes and time outs.

Waco, Texas. On February 26, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted an oversight visit to the Waco Regional Office, the largest Veterans Service Center in the nation. Employees reported satisfaction with the RO director due to his providing opportunities for their professional development, but they reported inadequate national training for new hires, resulting in low quality work across the nation. Employees also raised concerns about how PACT Act implementation was rushed, and sub regulatory guidance and training resources are inconsistent, which informed a subcommittee oversight hearing later that year.

Houston, Texas. On February 27, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff accompanied Subcommittee Chairman Luttrell for an oversight visit to the Houston VBA Regional Office to evaluate claims processing and workload management, particularly under the National Work Queue (NWQ). Under Secretary for Benefits Joshua Jacobs highlighted VBA's progress in reducing the claims backlog following the implementation of the PACT Act. Discussions with RO leadership and the RO's Quality Review Team (QRT) focused on the NWQ, including how the system does not allow for employees to learn from all their mistakes, which informed a Subcommittee oversight hearing later in the year.

Dayton, Ohio. On March 18, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff accompanied Representative Mike Turner on an oversight visit to the Dayton National Cemetery. This was then-Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Quinn's first visit to the cemetery. They were briefed by National Cemetery Administration (NCA) employees on construction plans for the expansion of the cemetery, which would extend behind historical buildings and run adjacent to a parking lot. Concerns were raised about the NCA's lack of collaboration with the community regarding the expansion plans, which informed a Subcommittee oversight hearing later in the year.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. On April 17, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted oversight visits to the Philadelphia VBA Regional Office, Philadelphia National Cemetery, and Mount Moriah Cemetery. At the RO's Pension Management Center

(PMC), employees processing survivors' benefits claims raised concerns about the ineffectiveness of automation tools provided to them, as well as automation tools that should be provided to them but are only provided to Compensation Service; glitches in technology systems; and low-quality work at other PMCs. This informed proposed legislation later in the year. At the Philadelphia National Cemetery, employees discussed rising costs of maintenance, and at the Mount Moriah Soldiers Plot and Naval Plot, staff observed the revitalization and upkeep of these historic sites.

San Diego, California. On May 3, 2024, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff conducted oversight visits to the San Diego Regional Office, Miramar National Cemetery, and Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar to assess claims processing, cemetery operations, and the health and safety of service members. At the RO, employees raised issues with quality of national training, noting that local Quality Review Teams often compensate for inadequate national training programs by providing local training, which informed a Subcommittee oversight hearing later that year. Marimar National Cemetery provided staff a tour, and staff were pleased with the immaculate state of the cemetery, despite their challenges with recruitment and retention due to high cost of living. At MCAS Miramar, service members shared concerns about exposure to toxic substances, such as Jet Propellant 8 (JP-8), and continued challenges related to accessing mental health support on the base.

Des Moines, Iowa. On June 6, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted oversight visits to the Des Moines Regional Office and the Iowa Veterans Cemetery. At the RO, staff observed the Veterans Benefits Administration's first annual Quality Standdown Day training, and employees told staff that though the training was beneficial generally, local training fills in many gaps in the national training. Employees emphasized the need for improved national training and clearer guidance on Toxic Exposure Risk Activity claims under the PACT Act. At the Iowa Veterans Cemetery, a state grant-funded cemetery, staff expressed concerns about inadequate funding from the Iowa state government and the National Cemetery Administration, as well as staffing shortages and outdated equipment, which they noted hinder cemetery operations. This informed a subcommittee oversight hearing later that year.

Lincoln, Nebraska. On June 7, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted oversight visits to the Lincoln Regional Office and Omaha National Cemetery. At the Lincoln RO, employees noted improvements to the automation tools for processing simple claims but noted that the automation tools are ineffective in complex cases, requiring manual intervention. RO staff also highlighted the need for more comprehensive national training for claims processors. At Offutt Air Force Base, airmen operating the Boeing RC 135 "Rivet Joint" reconnaissance aircraft raised concerns about hazardous conditions during missions, including high-intensity radio wave exposure, electrical fires, cramped working spaces, and emotional strain from their missions. At the Omaha National Cemetery, leadership raised concerns about staffing shortages and the urn/plaque benefit policy, which informed proposed legislation.

Roanoke, Virginia. On June 18, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted an oversight visit to the Roanoke Regional Office, a recently designated site for processing backlogged Military Sexual Trauma (MST) claims. Employees noted inadequate training, given no option to opt out of processing such claims, and rushed implementation at their office. The reports of inadequate training for MST claims processors informed proposed legislation.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

DERRICK VAN ORDEN, Wisconsin, *Chairman*

MIKE LEVIN, California, *Ranking Member*

NANCY MACE, South Carolina

SCOTT FRANKLIN, Florida

JUAN CISCOMANI, Arizona

ELI CRANE, Arizona

FRANK MRVAN, Indiana

MORGAN McGARVEY, Kentucky

DELIA RAMIREZ, Illinois

KATY FLYNN, *Majority Staff Director*

JUSTIN VOGT, *Minority Staff Director*

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Markup. On April 18, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 645, Healthy Foundations for Homeless Veterans Act; H.R. 728, To Direct the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training to carry out a pilot program on short-term programs for veterans; H.R. 746, Streamlining Aviation for Eligible Veterans Act; H.R. 1169, VA E-Notification Enhancement Act; H.R. 1635, the Filipino Education Fairness Act; H.R. 1669, VET-TEC Authorization Act of 2023; H.R. 1767, Student Veteran Benefit Restoration Act; H.R. 1786, Get Rewarding Outdoor Work for our Veterans Act; H.R. 1798, Protect Military Dependents Act; and H.R. 1799, EMPLOY VETS Act. H.R. 746, H.R. 1169, H.R. 1635, and H.R. 1786 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 728, H.R. 1767, H.R. 1669, H.R. 1798, H.R. 645, and H.R. 1799 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended.

The following groups submitted letters of support: Military-Veterans Advocacy

Subcommittee Markup. On July 19, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 3848, HOME Act of 2023; H.R. 3874, Veterans Education Assistance Improvement Act; H.R. 3898, Transcript Assurance for Heroes Act; H.R. 3900, To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish certain rights for spouses of members of the uniformed services; H.R. 3933, TAP Promotion Act; H.R. 3943, Servicemember Employment Protection Act of 2023; and H.R. 3981, Veterans Education Oversight Expansion Act. H.R. 3933 and H.R. 3874 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 3943, H.R. 3848, H.R. 3900, H.R. 3898, and H.R. 3981 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended.

Subcommittee Markup. On November 15, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 522, Deliver for Veterans Act; H.R. 2830, Veteran Improvement Commercial Driver License Act of 2023; H.R. 3601, Student Veteran Work Study Modernization Act; H.R. 3722, Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act and the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to it; H.R. 3738, To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes; H.R. 5785, To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the requirements of the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship and the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to it; H.R. 5913, Consolidating Veteran Employment Services for Improved Performance Act of 2023; H.R. 5914, To amend title, United States Code, to improve the processes to approve programs of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; H.R. 5956, G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2023; and H.R. 6193 To amend title 38, United States Code, to waive the fee for a housing loan guaranteed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a veteran with a service-connected disability who applied for such loan before receiving a disability rating from the Secretary. H.R. 522, H.R. 3601, H.R. 3738, H.R. 5914, H.R. 5956, H.R. 2830,

and H.R. 6913 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 3722 and H.R. 5785 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended. H.R. 5913 was withdrawn.

Subcommittee Markup. On April 17, 2024, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 6225, Expanding Home Loans for Guard and Reservists Act; H.R. 6656, Stuck on Hold Act; H.R. 7323, Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserves Tuition Fairness Act; H.R. 7613, Veterans Flight Training Responsibility Act of 2024; H.R. 7643, Veterans Congressional Work Study Act of 2024; H.R. 7653, VERY Act of 2024; and H.R. 7732, ETS Act. H.R. 6656, H.R. 7613, H.R. 7732, H.R. 6225, and H.R. 7643, were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended. H.R. 7323 and H.R. 7653 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment.

Subcommittee Markup. On June 27, 2024, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 226, Veterans Collaboration Act; H.R. 7896, VETS Opportunity Act of 2024; H.R. 7920, Agriculture Grants for Veteran Education and Training Services Act; H.R. 8592, Warriors to Workforce Act; H.R. 8646, Modernizing the Veterans On-Campus Experience Act of 2024; H.R. 8647, VA Home Loan Program Reform Act; H.R. 8661, Reforming Education for Veterans Act; H.R. 7543, Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2024; H.R. 8560, End Veteran Homelessness Act of 2024; H.R. 8514, To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide an annual increase in stipend for books, supplies, equipment, and other education costs under Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of Department of Veterans Affairs; and H.R. 8627, Student Veteran Debt Relief Act of 2024. H.R. 226, H.R. 7896, H.R. 8592, H.R. 8646, H.R. 8647, H.R. 8661, H.R. 7543, H.R. 8514, and H.R. 8627, as amended, were order reported to full committee, passed by voice vote. H.R. 7920 and H.R. 8560, without amendment, were order reported to full committee, passed by voice vote.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative hearing on H.R. 291, Vaccine Discharge Parity Act; H.R. 645, Healthy Foundations for Homeless Veterans Act; H.R. 728, To direct the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans’ Employment and Training to carry out a pilot program on short-term programs for veterans; H.R. 746, Streamlining Aviation for Eligible Veterans Act; H.R. 1169, VA E-Notification Enhancement Act; H.R. 1635, the Filipino Education Fairness Act; H.R. 1669, VET-TEC Authorization Act of 2023; H.R. 1767, Student Veteran Benefit Restoration Act; H.R. 1786, Get Rewarding Outdoor Work for our Veterans Act; H.R. 1798, Protect Military Dependents Act; and H.R. 1799, Ensure Military Personnel Learn Opportunities Yielding Vocations that Employ Transitioning Servicemembers Act.”

On March 30, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel:

Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director of Education Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nick Pamperin, Executive Director of Veteran Readiness and Employment, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Keith Harris, Senior Executive Homelessness Agent, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Tammy Barlet, Vice President of Government Affairs, Student Veterans of America; Mr. Matthew Brennan, Veteran Education and Employment Policy Analyst, The American Legion; Ms. Alicia Boddy, Chief Operations and Development Officer, Code Platoon; and Mr. Patrick Murray, Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The following group submitted a statement for the record: Disabled American Veterans and National Coalition for Homeless Veterans.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 491, Return Home to Housing Act; H.R. 3874, Veterans Education Assistance Improvement Act; H.R. 3848, Housing our Military Veterans Effectively Act; H.R. 3933, TAP Promotion Act; H.R. 3898, Transcript Assurance for Heroes Act; H.R. 3981, Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act; H.R. 3943, Servicemember Employment Protection Act of 2023; and H.R. 3900, To amend title 38, to establish certain employment and reemployment rights for spouses of members of the uniformed services.”

On June 14, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified for the first panel: Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director of Education Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Melissa Cohen, Deputy Executive Director of Outreach, Transition, and Economic Development, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Monica Diaz, Executive Director, Office of Homeless Programs, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training Services, U.S. Department of Labor; and Mr. Paul Marone, USERRA Policy Chief for Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor.

The following witnesses testified for the second panel: Mr. Patrick Murray, Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mr. Ricardo Gomez, Employment & Education Policy Associate, The American Legion; Mr. Matthew Schwartzman, Director, Legislation and Military Policy, Reserve Organization of America; Ms. Meredith M. Smith, Government Relations Deputy Director, National Military Family Association; and Mr. Kevin Hollinger, Legislative Director, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: The American Legion, Alston Wilkes Society, Disabled American Veterans, Families and Community Services, Inc., HVAF of Indiana, Inc., Rep. Morgan McGarvey, Nation’s Finest, New England Center, Operation Dignity, Mr. Ryan Thompson, U.S. Vets Inglewood, U.S. Vets Inland Empire, U.S. Vets Long Beach, U.S. Vets Pres-

cott, Veterans Education Success, Veterans Integration Centers, and Volunteers of America.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“H.R. 522, Deliver for Veterans Act; H.R. 2830, Veteran Improvement Commercial Driver License Act of 2023; H.R. 3601, Student Veteran Work Study Modernization Act; H.R. 3722, Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act and the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to it; H.R. 3738, To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes; H.R. 3816, Veterans’ Entry to Apprenticeship Act; H.R. 5190, Military Family Protection from Debt Act; H.R. 5702, Expanding Access for Online Veteran Students Act; H.R. 5785, To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the requirements of the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship; H.R. 5913, Consolidating Veteran Employment Services for Improved Performance Act of 2023; H.R. 5914, To amend title, United States Code, to improve the processes to approve programs of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; H.R. 5956, G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2023; and Discussion Draft, To amend title 38, United States Code, to waive the fee for a housing loan guaranteed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a veteran with a service-connected disability who applied for such loan before receiving a disability rating from the Secretary.”

On November 2, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director, Education Services, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nick Pamperin, Executive Director, Veterans Readiness & Employment Services, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. James Ruhlman, Deputy Director, Education Services, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Margarita Devlin, Deputy Assistant Secretary Operations and Management, U.S. Department of Labor.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Kristina Keenan, Deputy Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mr. Marquis Barefield, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Ms. Tammy Barlet, Vice President of Government Affairs, Student Veterans of America; Mr. Joseph W. Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Director, National Association of State Approving Agencies, Inc.; and Mr. Michael Hazard, Veterans in Piping Program Manager, United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Commercial Vehicle Training Association, National Association of State

Workforce Agencies, The American Legion, Veterans Education Project, and Veterans Education Success.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“H.R. 6656, Stuck on Hold Act; H.R. 7323, To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disapprove courses of education offered by a public institution of higher learning that does not charge the in-State tuition rate to a veteran using certain educational assistance under title 10 of such Code; H.R. 7613, To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a limitation on the amount of entitlement to educational assistance payable for flight training under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; Discussion Draft, To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the restoration of entitlement of individuals entitled to educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs who use such entitlement to pursue a course or program of education at an educational institution found to have violated certain prohibitions on advertising, sales, and enrollment practices, and for other purposes; H.R. 7732, To amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to make improvements to certain programs for a member nearing separation, or for a veteran who recently separated, from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; H.R. 6225, Expanding Home Loans for Guard and Reservists Act; H.R. 7643, To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the use of Department of Veterans Affairs work-study allowance to carry out casework, policy making, and oversight related to the activities of the Department at certain congressional offices; H.R. 7653, To amend title 38, United States Code, to update certain terminology regarding veteran employment; and H.R. 7703, Fair Access to Co-ops for Veterans Act of 2024”

On March 20, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Ms. Melissa Cohen, Executive Director, Executive Director of Outreach, Transition, and Economic Development, Veterans Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nathan Sanfilippo, Executive Director of Multichannel Technology, Veterans Experience Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Thomas Alphonso, Assistance Director of Education Services, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Nadine Bullock-Pottinga, Chief Development Officer, Hire Heroes USA; Mr. Gregory John, Founder & President, Infinity Flight Group; Mr. Matthew Schwartzman, Director, Legislation and Military Policy, Reserve Organization of America; Ms. Kristina Keenan, Deputy Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign

Wars; and Mr. Marquis Barefield, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Representative Ken Calvert (California), Disabled American Veterans, The American Legion, Veterans Education Success, USAA, and Joint Statement- RecruitMilitary, Orion Talent, ZeroMils, Semper Forward, and Military Talent Pipeline, LLC.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“H.R. 226, the Veterans Collaboration Act, H.R. 7543, the Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2024, H.R. 7896, the VETS Opportunity Act of 2024, H.R. 7920, Agriculture Grants for Veterans Education and Training Services Act, H.R. 8529, Warriors to Workforce Act, H.R. 8661, the Reforming Education for Veterans Act, H.R. 8646, Modernizing the Veterans On-Campus Experience Act, H.R. 8647, the VA Home Loan Reform Act, H.R. 8514, To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for an annual increase in stipend for books, supplies, equipment, and other educational costs under Post9/11 Educational Assistance Program of Department of Veterans Affairs, H.R. 8560, the End Veteran Homelessness Act of 2024, H.R. 8627, the Student Veteran Debt Relief Act of 2024, and H.R. 8607, To amend title 38 United States Code, to make certain legatees of certain eligible veterans eligible for housing loans guaranteed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.”

On June 12, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. John Bell, Executive Director, Loan Guaranty Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director, Education Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. James Ruhlman, Deputy Director, Education Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Jill Albanese, Director, Clinical Operations/Senior Advisor, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Jan Del Signore, President, National Association of Veterans Program Administrators; Mr. Kevin O’Neil, Senior Employment and Education Policy Association, The American Legion; Ms. Karen Kreutziger Powell, Chief Executive Officer of Flat Home Loans, Mortgage Bankers Association; Mr. Marquis Barefield, Assistant National Legislative Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Richard Brookshire, Chief Executive Officer, Black Veterans Project.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Housing Policy Council, The Military Coalition, National Association of Realtors, National Consumer Law Center, Navy Federal Credit Union, National Guard Association of the United States, Reserve Organization of America, Student Veterans of America, Veterans Education Success, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S., National Alliance to End Homelessness.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Examining the Future of Workforce Protections for Servicemembers”

On March 9, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing on the status of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Right Act (USERRA). The Subcommittee sought to review the oversight of the Department of Labor’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) control of USERRA, and determine what future changes should be made, if any. The hearing also examined how USERRA has impacted servicemembers and has been enforced through VETS. Lastly, the hearing reviewed potential changes from stakeholders that should be made to better protect servicemembers and businesses.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witness testified on the first panel: Mr. James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Col. Gilbert L. Patton (Ret.), Reserve Organization of America; Mr. Mike Hadley, Director of Legislative Affairs, National Guard Association of the United States; Mr. Kevin Hollinger, Legislative Director, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States; and Mr. Jonathan E. Taylor, Principal, Gupta Wessler.

The following group submitted a statement for the record: U.S. Department of Defense.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“All Hands on Deck: Ending Veteran Homelessness in San Diego”

On May 4, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight field hearing in Oceanside, California to examine the current state of veteran homelessness in San Diego, and future steps of the U.S. Department on Veterans Affairs and local stakeholders should take to reach functional zero in the region.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Frank P. Pearson, DPT, PA-C, Director, Jennifer Moreno VA San Diego Healthcare System, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jill Albanese, Senior Advisor and Director of Clinical Operations, Homeless Program Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Leilani A. Hines, Housing and Neighborhood Services Director, Oceanside Public Housing Authority; Mr. David Estrella, Director of Housing and Community Development, San Diego County Public Housing Authority; and Mr. Matthew Wechter, Supervising Attorney, Public Defendant Homeless Court Team, San Diego County.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Greg Anglea, CEO, Interfaith Community Services; Ms. Hanan Scrapper, Regional Director, PATH San Diego, People Assisting the Homeless (PATH); Dr. Dustin Potash, Veterans Director, Adjoin; and Mr. Sean Spear, President and CEO, Community Housing Works.

The following group submitted statements for the record: San Diego Regional Housing Commission.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“The Transition Assistance Program: Steps to Ensure Success for Servicemembers as they Enter Civilian Life”

On May 17, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the current state of the Transition Assistance Program across the armed services and determine what steps should be made to continue modernizing and reforming the program through legislation.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Alex Baird, Acting Director of the Defense Support Services Center, U.S. Department of Defense; Ms. Cheryl J. Rawls, Executive Director, Outreach, Transition and Economic Development, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Margarita Devlin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor; Ms. Dawn Locke, Director, Strategic Studies, Government Accountability Office.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Britany Dymond, Associate Director, National Security and Foreign Affairs Directorate, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mr. Michael Quinn, Chief Executive Officer, Hire Military & Tenova LLC; Dr. Abby Kinch, PhD, Chief of Staff, Student Veterans of America; Mr. Jim Lorraine, President and CEO, America’s Warrior Partnership; and Mr. Hernan y Prado, Founder and CEO, Workshops for Warriors.

Joint Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Reviewing the Digital G.I. Bill Program”

On July 13, 2023, the Subcommittees on Economic Opportunity and Technology Modernization held a joint oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs progress implementing the Digital G.I. Bill IT system, which aims to streamline G.I. Bill claims processing by consolidating antiquated legacy IT systems and automating steps.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director, Education Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Orifici, Benefits and Memorial Services Portfolio Director, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans; Mr. Troy Mueller, Senior Advisor and Department Head, Veterans Benefits Administration Mission, MITRE; Mr. David Powner, Executive Director, Center for Data-Driven Policy, MITRE; and Mr. Kyle Michl, DGIB Senior Delivery and Chief Innovation Officer, Accenture Federal Services.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Less is More: The Impact of Bureaucratic Red Tape on Veterans Education Benefits”

On September 20, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the current state of the G.I. Bill and the implantation and utilization of Risk-Based Surveys at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ veteran education services. The Subcommittee also reviewed the impact of new rules and procedures on veterans, institutions of higher learning, State Approving Agencies, and the VA itself. They also sought to consider steps VA could take to improve GI Bill benefits, alleviate the bur-

den on participating educational institutions, and ensure veterans receive a high-quality benefits experience.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director, Education Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. James Ruhlman, Deputy Director, Program Management, Education Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Joseph W. Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Director, National Association of State Approving Agencies, Inc.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mrs. Anne Meehan, Assistant Vice President, Government Relations, American Council on Education; Dr. Jan Del Signore, President, National Association of Veterans' Program Administrators; Mr. Will Hubbard, Vice President for Veterans and Military Policy, Veterans Education Success; and Mr. Joe Rasmussen, Director, University Veteran Services at UW-Madison.

The following groups submitted as statement for the record: The American Legion and Mr. Charles Bernstein.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—"Sink or Swim? A Deep Dive into the Current State of VA's Home Loan Program in a Competitive Market"

On February 15, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the current state of the Home Loan Guaranty program and VA's Servicing Purchase (VASP) program, which will be released in 2024. The Subcommittee aimed to review the VA home loan program, including VA procedures governing mortgages, appraisals, refinancing, and foreclosures, with input from stakeholders such as veterans, mortgage brokers, and VA. Finally, the Subcommittee considered steps VA could take to improve the home loan and VASP program in a fiscally responsible manner and ensure veterans receive a high-quality homebuying experience.

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: Mr. John E. Bell, Executive Director, Loan Guaranty Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Edward J. DeMarco, President, Housing Policy Council; Mr. Mark Jones, Chairman, Mortgage Bankers Association; and Mr. Steve Sharpe, Senior Attorney, National Consumer Law Center.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—"Exploring the Use of Data-Driven Methods and Community Collaboration to Reduce Veteran Homelessness"

On June 27, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to the current state of veteran homelessness, analyze data collection methods, and assess community collaboration initiatives aimed at reducing veteran homelessness. The Subcommittee explored data capabilities at VA and steps that VA and its community partners can use to identify housing-insecure veterans and connect them with appropriate resources to achieve functional zero within communities.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Thomas O'Toole, Deputy Undersecretary for Health Clinical Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Jeff Olivet, Executive Director, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Rosanne Haggerty, President, Community Solutions; Mr. Ray Carville, Public Affairs Manager, Veterans Inc.; Dr. Randy Withrow, Site Director, Veterans Housing and Recovery Program, Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan; and Mr. Nick Wood, Regional Site Director, Nations' Finest.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Black Veterans Empowerment Council, Inc., Endeavors, New England Center and Home for Veterans, and Rep. Deila Ramirez.

Subcommittee Oversight Joint Hearing—"Leveling the Playing Field: Examining the Landscape of Veteran Owned Small Businesses"

On July 23, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight joint hearing with the Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure to highlight the experience of veterans in establishing and running a small business. The hearing aimed to create awareness regarding programs and assistance for veterans and emphasize the benefits of veterans and military spouses establishing and running small businesses. The hearing focused on veteran-owned small businesses (VOSBs) and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses (SDVOSBs) and what the Committees can do to eliminate any potential barriers to the veteran entrepreneurship.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Stephanie Brown, CEO and Founder, The Rosie Network; Mr. Stephen Hayduk, Senior Principal, Hayduk Engineering LLC; Mr. Bill Belknap, President, AEONRG, LLC; and Mr. Jon Tellier, President, JetCo Solutions.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: America's Credit Unions

Subcommittee Oversight Field Hearing—"Examining Transitioning Servicemembers Experience"

On August 23, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight field hearing at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse, in La Crosse, Wisconsin to examine the veteran transition experience, both on and off campus, and steps the Department of Veteran's Affairs, schools, veteran service organizations, and community members could take to improve the experience for veterans.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Duane Honeycutt, Executive Director, Milwaukee VA Regional Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nick Pamperin, Executive Director, Veteran Readiness and Employment, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Melissa Cohen, Executive Director, Outreach Transition, and Economic Development,

Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Joe Quackenboss, Veteran Service Officer, Trempealeau County; Mr. Dustin Schultz, Veteran Specialist, Western Technical College; Ms. Danielle Luba, Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Ms. Kaytlyn Brown, Student Veteran, Western Technical College; and Mr. Adrian Moreno, Student Veteran, University of Wisconsin La Cross.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Disabled American Veterans

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Mission Transition: Evaluating Mental Health Support Programs for Separating Servicemembers”

On September 10, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to focus on the effectiveness of current mental health care programs during the transition from military to civilian life. Additionally, the Subcommittee assessed data capabilities and explored strategies for VA, DOL, and DOD to better identify and connect with veterans in need of mental health resources.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Melissa Cohen, Executive Director, Outreach Transition, and Economic Development, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jill Debord, Executive Director, Care Management and Social Work, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Susan Orsega, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Services Policy and Oversight, U.S. Department of Defense; Ms. Alyssa Hundrup, Director of Health Care, Government Accountability Office; and Mr. James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Western Governors Association

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Digital GI Bill in Disarray: Holding the Biden-Harris Administration Accountable for VA’s Costly Mismanagement”

On September 26, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) progress at retiring antiquated legacy IT systems and implementing the Digital G.I. Bill IT system, which aims to streamline the processing of education benefits under the G.I. Bill. The hearing focused on the report from the Office of Inspector General (OIG) highlighting issues with the planning, expectations, and execution of the Digital GI Bill (DGIB) project. The hearing also reviewed the recommendations of the Office of the Inspector General to improve the program and ideas to make the DGIB program more efficient for veterans.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Ronald Burke, Undersecretary for Policy and Oversight, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of

Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Orifici, Executive Director, Benefits and Memorial Services, Office of Information and Technology, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director, Education Services, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nicholas Dahl, Deputy Assistant Inspector General, Management and Administration, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Justin Parke, Managing Director, DGIB Program Manager, Accenture Federal Services; and MITRE.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: The MITRE Corporation

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Examining the Effectiveness of the Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Program”

On December 11, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine several aspects of the VR&E program, including staffing, management, outcomes, effectiveness, and needs. The subcommittee focused on the recent increase in applicants due to the PACT Act, as well as the impact this surge has had on counselor caseloads and veterans’ experiences. Additionally, this hearing highlighted the strengths of the VR&E program in serving veterans and identify areas for improvement.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Nick Pamperin, Executive Director, Veteran Readiness and Employment, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Kenneth P. Smith, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary, Operation Management Team, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Julie Howell, Associate Legislative Director for Government Relations, Paralyzed Veterans of America; and Dr. Keith Glindemann, President, National Association of Veteran Program Administrators.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and Student Veterans of America.

ROUNDTABLES

Subcommittee Roundtable—“Transition Assistance Program”

On September 11, 2023, the Subcommittee conducted a roundtable with the four corners and veteran service organizations to discuss potential improvements for the Transition Assistance Program, evaluate gaps in services and servicemembers’ and dependents’ accessibility to services, examine consistency across the services/OSD support in accordance with mission readiness, discuss retirement/separation/spousal employment barriers, and discuss unique transition issues in the Guard and Reserve components.

In attendance were: Mr. Michael Bianchi, Institute for Veterans and Military Families; Ms. Deborah Bradford, Institute for Vet-

erans and Military Families; Ms. Ashley Scott, Blue Star Families; Ms. Jenny Akin, Blue Star Families; Mr. Matt Schwartzmann, Reserve Officers Association; Mr. Trey Criner, Reserve Officers Association; Mr. Julian M. Plamann, National Guard Association of the United States; Ms. Marcy Weldin, National Guard Association of the United States; Mr. Kevin Hollinger, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States; Mr. Joe Sharpe, The American Legion; Mr. John Kaim, The American Legion; Mr. Pat Murray, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Ms. Brittany Dymond, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mr. Cory Titus, Military Officers Association of America; Mr. Pat Williams, Military Officers Association of America; Mr. Marquis Barefield, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Matt Jahn, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Morgan Brown, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Mr. Charles McCaffrey, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Mr. Aleks Morosky, Wounded Warrior Project; Mr. Jeremy Villanueva, Wounded Warrior Project; Ms. Tammy Barlet, Student Veterans of America; Mr. Thomas Winkel, Arizona Coalition for Military Families; Ms. Kelly Hruska, National Military Family Association; Mr. Michael Quinn, HireMilitary; Mr. Chris Thorne, North San Diego Business Chamber; Dr. Arthur S. DeGroat, Ed.D., Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.), Military Innovation Center-Kansas State University; Mr. Will Hubbard, Veterans Education Success; Mr. James Rodriguez, U.S. Department of Labor; Ms. Cheryl J. Rawls, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. John Boerstler, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Roundtable—“Higher Education Roundtable”

On January 18, 2024, the Subcommittee conducted a roundtable with the four corners and higher education groups to discuss potential improvements for the GI Bill Comparison Tool, current data collection practices, H.R. 5956, evaluation of gaps in veteran-specific data collection, and GI Bill return on investment.

In attendance were: Mr. Jeff Arthur, ECPI University; Mr. Alex Cassell, American Council on Education; Ms. Anne Meehan, American Council on Education; Stephanie Giesecke, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; Mr. Justin Monk, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; Mr. Jim Hermes, American Association of Community Colleges; Mr. Kent Phillippe, American Association of Community Colleges; Ms. Bao Le, Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities; Mr. Craig Lindwarm, Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities; Mr. Morgan Taylor, American Association of State Colleges and Universities; and Mr. John Patrick Walsh, American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

SITE VISITS

Orlando, Florida. On January 6, 2023, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff attended the Student Veterans of America 2023 National Conference in Orlando, FL. Committee staff participated in a conference legislative priorities panel and a breakout session with Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) and conference attendees. Committee staff highlighted recent legislative proposals passed into law, discussed priorities for the 118th Congress, and

listened to concerns from G.I. Bill beneficiaries and School Certifying Officials.

Portland, Oregon. On February 22, 2023, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff conducted a site visit to the Vancouver, Washington VA Medical Center to review the Portland, Oregon, and surrounding area Homeless Program Office (HPO). Staff met with HPO leadership to discuss the status of VA homeless programs in the area. The Portland-Vancouver HPO focuses heavily on housing homeless veterans through the Grant and Per-Diem (GPD) program, but they had been having staffing issues. Committee staff discussed ways the HPO had been able to overcome staffing issues and listened to what ways GPD could still be improved. Committee Staff also visited an on-campus Enhanced Use-Lease facility that was under renovation. Unfortunately, Committee staff were unable to visit a GPD provider in Portland because of bad weather in the area.

Seattle, Washington. On February 23, 2023, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff conducted a site visit to the Seattle Community Resource and Referral Center. The purpose of this travel was to conduct oversight of VA's status of homeless programs in Seattle and the King County area. VA Homeless Program Office leadership, as well as the King County Public Housing Authority personnel, were in attendance to discuss GPD, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) issues in the Seattle area. Seattle had specific problems with veterans making over the maximum for housing vouchers even though they did not have employment. Subcommittee staff also met with community providers, toured several GPD facilities, and discussed funding and hiring and issues with case managers and GPD programs.

Seattle, Washington. On March 14, 2023, the Subcommittees on Economic Opportunity and Disability Assistance and Military Affairs majority staff attended the Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA) Senior leadership symposium in Seattle, WA. The purpose of this travel was to attend the conference with the VBA and Regional Office (RO) leadership to learn more about the implementation of the PACT Act and recent changes to the Veteran Readiness & Employment (VRE) program.

San Diego, California. On May 4, 2023, the Subcommittee held a field hearing in Oceanside, California. During the hearing, Subcommittee staff heard about homeless issues in the San Diego area from the VA, Oceanside and San Diego County Public Housing Authority, and local community providers. The purpose of this trip was to gain an understanding of veteran homelessness in an area where housing costs are high and there are a large number of veterans. Additionally, Subcommittee staff conducted an oversight visit of the Naval Special Warfare Command (NSW) in Coronado, California to receive a briefing on NSW's Transition Assistance Program (TAP), and their special program called Readiness for SOF Transition (R4ST). Subcommittee staff also met with NSW leadership to discuss the changing environment in TAP and how TAP outcomes could be improved.

Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Fort Liberty, North Carolina, Norfolk Naval Station, Virginia. From August 7 to 9, 2023, the

Subcommittee majority staff went on StaffDel Flynn to oversee TAP at Camp Lejeune, Fort Liberty, and Norfolk Naval Station. Committee and personal office staff met with base commanders at Camp Lejeune and Fort Liberty, as well as TAP counselors and servicemembers about the current transition process across the Armed Services. Majority staff were concerned about the Armed Service's inability to provide the information and data required by Congress. Majority staff also learned that while TAP is highly encouraged to be in-person whenever possible, many of the services were encouraging participation in TAP online instead of in person. The staff also listened in on DOL and DOD TAP courses and were able to attend a Skillbridge class with Trane Technologies and BMW at Fort Liberty.

Georgetown University, Washington, DC. On October 12, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted a site visit at Georgetown University to meet with School Certifying Officials about the status of Enrollment Manager and listen to concerns both the school and veterans had about the system.

Buffalo, New York. On November 16, 2023, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff conducted an oversight visit at the Buffalo, NY Regional Office. Staff met with RO leadership to discuss current issues in VA education, listen to their concerns about the Digital G.I. Bill system, and oversee the education claims process. Staff also met with on the ground VA employees to listen to their concerns and see how the Education Service can be improved.

Nashville, Tennessee. On January 5, 2024, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff attended the Student Veterans of America 2024 National Conference in Nashville, TN. Committee staff participated in a conference legislative priorities panel and a breakout session with Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) and conference attendees. Committee staff highlighted recent legislative proposals passed into law, discussed priorities for the 118th Congress, such as TAP reform and improvements to the VR&E program and listened to concerns from G.I. Bill beneficiaries and School Certifying Officials.

Miami, Florida. On February 28, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff arrived to meet with the Miami VA Medical Center Homeless Program Office, as well as visit two homeless providers, Camillus House and Carrfour Supportive Housing. Committee staff also visited the Sunrise, FL VR&E facility and a Veteran Success on Campus Coordinator (VSOC) at Florida International University (FIU). This two-day visit was focused on gaining information on the homeless situation in Miami, FL, and how the homeless providers are performing with a decreased amount of Grant Per-Deim (GPD) post-COVID-19. The trip also focused on learning ways we could improve and reduce the administrative workload of VR&E counselors and VSOCs.

St. Paul, Minnesota. On April 17, 2024, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff visited the St. Paul Regional Office on Thursday, April 18, 2024; staff met with the regional office VA employees in the morning for a briefing. Committee staff met and discussed VR&E and Loan Guaranty Service issues one-on-one with front-line staff.

Baltimore, Maryland, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. On April 23, 2024, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff met with the Maryland DOL-VETS State Level Office and visited one of the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP) and Jobs for Veteran State Grants (JVSG) combination sites. Committee staff on Wednesday visited the DOL-VETS Regional Office in Philadelphia and a Veterans Multi-Service Center. This two-day visit focused on gaining information on how well the JVSG and HVRP programs are working to serve and provide better economic opportunities for veterans. The trip also focused on learning ways DOL-VETS could improve the tracking of the employment programs to ensure they are an effective use of taxpayer dollars.

Las Vegas, Nevada. On August 12, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff attended conference sessions and a panel discussion on their legislative priorities with the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. They also engaged with several VSOs and SCOs. This three-day visit focused on attending conference seminars on veteran education, employment, and SAA and SCO issues they face on the field. Additionally, this trip aimed to update SAAs on relevant legislative initiatives during a legislative panel with Committee staff, veteran service organizations (VSOs), and school certifying officials (SCOs). Finally, Committee staff were able to meet and discuss some of the SAA legislative priorities.

Des Moines, Iowa. On August 19, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff attended a veteran roundtable with Rep. Nunn in Des Moines, Iowa on Tuesday, August 20, 2024. During the roundtable, Committee staff was able to hear about veteran issues local to Iowa and receive updates of how national legislation has impacted veterans and their families in Rep. Nunn's District.

La Crosse, Wisconsin. On August 23, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff met with School Certifying Officials at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse to find ways to reduce red tape in the education benefit space.

New Orleans, Louisiana. On August 23, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff attended the American Legion National Convention on Saturday, August 24, 2024. Staff participated in 4-Corners legislative priorities meeting with House minority and Senate minority staff to discuss legislative and oversight priorities for the rest of the Congress. Subcommittee staff heard during a Q&A session about the VBA budget shortfall, and the need to do more oversight and hold VA employees accountable.

Detroit, Michigan. On August 28, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted an oversight visit with Rep. John James at Selfridge Air National Guard Base during the morning of Thursday, August 29, 2024. Staff received briefings on TAP, mental health concerns, and education opportunities unique to Michigan National Guard members. During the afternoon, Subcommittee staff went to the University of Michigan to meet with student veterans and School Certifying Officials about their problems and solutions surrounding education benefits. On Friday, August 30, 2024, Subcommittee staff visited the Detroit Regional Office to hear about Veteran Readiness & Employment and Homeless Veteran Outreach Coordinator efforts. Additionally, Committee staff viewed the voter registration site at the Detroit RO.

Kansas City, Missouri. On September 10, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff attended the Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA) 2024 Fall Senior Leaders Symposium in Kansas City, MO. The purpose of this travel was to attend the conference with the VBA and Regional Office (RO) leadership to learn more about upcoming changes to the Veteran Readiness & Employment (VRE) program, Office of Equity Assurance Updates, a union leadership roundtable, and RO best practices.

Syracuse, New York. On October 4, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff, along with Representative Williams and his staff, visited the IVMF at the University of Syracuse. In the afternoon, the Subcommittee also attended a veteran roundtable with IVMF and other local stakeholders and constituents of Representative Williams at his district office. Committee staff, alongside Rep. Williams and his staff, learned about the research initiatives the IVMF is currently working on, including transition, mental health, and economic opportunities for veterans. Syracuse's IVMF has been a top-ranked research facility for veterans' issues nationwide.

Memphis, Tennessee. On October 4–6, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff conducted a visit to the Memphis VA Medical Center, University of Memphis, Alpha Omega Veteran Services, and LeMoyne-Owen College. The purpose of this visit was to review security screening systems, GI Bill implementation, and homeless services.

Kansas City, Missouri. On October 7–9, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff attended the National Association of Veteran Program Administrators Conference. Staff presented on a panel on veteran education issues before Congress and attended breakout sessions with attendees.

Los Angeles, California. On October 21, 2024, Subcommittee majority staff, along with Rep. Kim and her staff, attended a veteran roundtable at the American Legion Post 132. On the afternoon of the 21st, Subcommittee staff traveled to the Villages at Cabrillo in Long Beach, where they toured the facility and discussed current issues with US VETS. On the morning of October 22nd, Committee staff toured the West LA Campus, held a candid roundtable discussion with veterans living on the campus, met with leadership, and discussed recent updates to the West Los Angeles Master Plan, Grand and Per-Diem (GPD), and HUD–VASH vouchers.

New York, New York. On October 27–29, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff conducted an oversight of the New York VA Medical Center, and met with DOL Vets program participants, New York City veteran housing staff, Student Veterans of America chapters, and homelessness grant recipients.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

MARIANNETTE MILLER MEEKS, Iowa, *Chairwoman*
JULIA BROWNLEY, California, *Ranking Member*

AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN, American Samoa	MIKE LEVIN, California
JACK BERGMAN, Michigan	SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Florida ³
GREG MURPHY, North Carolina	GREG LANDSMAN, Ohio
DERRICK VAN ORDEN, Wisconsin	NIKKI BUDZINSKI, Illinois
MORGAN LUTTRELL, Texas	
JEN KIGGANS, Virginia	

JAMES WHITTAKER, *Majority Staff Director*
ALEXIS MACDONALD, *Minority Staff Director*

³On June 3, 2024, Representative Chris Deluzio resigned his position on the Subcommittee on Health, and on September 10, 2024, Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick joined the Subcommittee.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Markup. On April 18, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 41, VA Same-Day Scheduling Act of 2023; H.R. 562, Improving Veterans Access to Congressional Services Act of 2023; H.R. 808, Veterans Patient Advocacy Act; H.R. 754, Modernizing Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Act; H.R. 693, Veterans Affairs Medical Center Absence and Notification Timeline (VA-CANT) Act; H.R. 1089, VA Medical Center Transparency; H.R. 366, Korean American VALOR Act; and H.R. 1256, Veterans Health Administration Leadership Transformation Act. H.R. 754, H.R. 693, H.R. 1089, and H.R. 366 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 562, H.R. 808, H.R. 1256, and H.R. 41 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended.

Subcommittee Markup. On July 18, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 3520, Veteran Care Improvement Act of 2023; H.R. 3581, COPE Act; H.R. 1278, DRIVE Act; H.R. 1639, VA Zero Suicide Demonstration Act of 2023; H.R. 1774, VA Emergency Transportation Act; H.R. 1815, Expanding Veterans' Options for Long Term Care Act; H.R. 2683, VA Flood Preparedness Act; H.R. 2768, PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Program Act; and H.R. 2818, Autonomy for Disabled Veterans Act. H.R. 1278, H.R. 1639, H.R. 2683, H.R. 2768, and H.R. 3581 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 3520, H.R. 1815, H.R. 1774, and H.R. 2818 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended.

The following groups submitted letters of support: American Seniors Housing Association, Argentum, Leading Age, and National Center for Assisted Living.

Subcommittee Markup. On April 16, 2024, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 3225, BUILD for Veterans Act of 2023; H.R. 3303, Maternal Health for Veterans Act; H.R. 3644, ACT for Veterans Act; H.R. 3649, Veterans National Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment Act; H.R. 4424, Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act; H.R. 5530, VA Emergency Transportation Access Act; H.R. 5794, Veterans Affairs Peer Review Neutrality Act of 2023; H.R. 6324, Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act; H.R. 6373, Veterans STAND Act; H.R. 7347, To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report on whether the Secretary will include certain psychedelic drugs in the formulary of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and Lease Resolution. H.R. 3644, was ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended. H.R. 3584, H.R. 4424, H.R. 6373, H.R. 5530, H.R. 6324, H.R. 7347, H.R. 3225, H.R. 5794, H.R. 3649, H.R. 3303, and the Lease Resolutions were order reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment.

Subcommittee Markup. On September 18, 2024, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 9496, To amend title 38, United States Code, to include a representative of the National Association of State Veterans Homes on the Geriatrics and Gerontology Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 9324, Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2024;

H.R. 9478, Veterans Supporting Prosthetics Opportunities and Recreational Therapy (SPORT) Act; H.R. 9525, Service Dogs Assisting Veterans (SAVES) Act; H.R. 7504, Rural Veterans Transportation to Care Act; H.R. 9301, New Mexico Rural Veteran Health Care Access Act; H.R. 9485, Enhancing Faith-Based Support for Veterans Act of 2024; H.R. 9438, No Wrong Door for Veterans Act; H.R. 9146, Ensuring Continuity in Veterans Health Act; and H.R. 8562, Parity for Native Hawaiian Veterans Act. H.R. 9496, H.R. 9324, H.R. 9478, H.R. 9525, H.R. 7504, H.R. 9301, H.R. 9485, H.R. 9416, and H.R. 8562 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 9438 was ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 41, VA Same-Day Scheduling Act of 2023; H.R. 562, Improving Veterans Access to Congressional Services Act of 2023; H.R. 808, Veterans Patient Advocacy Act; H.R. 754, Modernizing Veterans’ Health Care Eligibility Act; H.R. 693, Veterans Affairs Medical Center Absence and Notification Timeline (VACANT) Act; H.R. 1089, VA Medical Center Facility Transparency Act; H.R. 366, Korean American VALOR Act; H.R. 542, Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023; and H.R. 1256, Veterans Health Administration Leadership Transformation Act”

On March 29, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were three witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Representative Brian Mast (FL–21); Representative Jim Baird (IN–4); Representative John Moolenaar (MI–2); Representative Steve Womack (AR–3); and Representative Debbie Lesko (AZ–8).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Alfred Montoya, Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Scotte Hartronft, Executive Director, Office of Geriatrics & Extended Care, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. David Perry, Chief Officer, Workforce Management, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the third panel: Mr. Jon Retzer, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Ms. Tiffany Ellett, Deputy Director of Health Policy, The American Legion; and Mr. Morgan Brown, National Legislative Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., AARP, Student Veterans of America, and Elizabeth Dole Foundation.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 3520, Veterans Care Improvement Act of 2023; H.R. 1182, Veterans Serving Veterans Act of 2023; H.R. 1774, VA Emergency Transportation Act; H.R. 2683, VA Flood Preparedness Act; H.R. 2768, PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Program Act; H.R. 2818, Autonomy for Disabled Veterans Act; H.R. 3581, Caregiver Outreach and Program Enhancement (COPE) Act; H.R. 1278, DRIVE Act; H.R. 1639, VA Zero Suicide Demonstration Project Act of 2023; and H.R. 1815, Expanding Veterans’ Options for Long Term Care Act”

On June 21, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were three witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Representative Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon (Puerto Rico-At Large).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Erica Scavella, M.D., Assistant Under Secretary for Health Clinical Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Colleen Richardson, Psy.D., Executive Director, Caregiver Support Program, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Scotte Hartronft, M.D., Executive Director, Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Mark Hausman, M.D., Executive Director, Integrated Access, Office of Integrated Veteran Care, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the third panel: Mr. Jon Retzer, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Ms. Tiffany Ellett, Director, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division; and Mr. Cole Lyle, Executive Director, Mission Roll Call, America’s Warrior Partnership.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: The Independence Fund, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., Wounded Warrior Project, All Points North Community Care Provider, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Representative Susie Lee (Nevada), Argentum, and Representative Mark Alford (Missouri).

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 3584, Veterans CARE Act; H.R. 3644, Act for Veterans Act; H.R. 3649, Veterans National Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment Act; H.R. 4424, Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act; H.R. 5530, VA Emergency Transportation Access Act; H.R. 6324, FY24 VA Major Medical Facility Authorization Act; H.R. 6373, Veterans STAND Act; H.R. 7347, To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report on whether the Secretary will include certain psychedelic drugs in the formulary of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 3225, BUILD for Veterans Act; H.R. 5794, VA Peer Review Neutrality Act; H.R. 3303 Maternal Health for Veterans Act; and H.R. 5247, Expedited Hiring for VA Trained Psychiatrists Act of 2023”

On March 21, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were three

witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Chairman Mike Bost (IL-12); Representative Chris Deluzio (PA-17); Representative Jack Bergman (MI-1); Representative Greg Murphy (NC-3); Representative Derrick Van Orden (WI-3); Representative Nick LaLota (NY-1); Representative Debbie Dingell (MI-6); and Representative Lauren Underwood (IL-14).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Ajit Pai, Executive Director, Office of Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Michael Brennan, Executive Director, Office of Construction and Facilities Management, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Wendy Tenhula, Deputy Chief Research and Development Officer, Office of Research and Development, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. David Perry, Chief Officer, Workforce Management and Consulting, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the third panel: Mr. Jon Retzer, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Mr. Roscoe Butler, Senior Health Policy Advisor, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Ms. Brittany Elliot, Veteran (USMC), Advocate; and Ms. Melissa Bryant, Chair, Board of Directors, Minority Veterans of America.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Association of Air Medical Services, Rep. Matt Cartwright, Jewish War Veterans, Military-Veterans Advocacy, Wounded Warrior Project, American Ambulance Association/International Association of Fire Chiefs, and TreatNOW.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 9496, to amend title 38, United States Code, to include a representative of the National Association of State Veterans Homes on the Geriatrics and Gerontology Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); H.R. 9427, Veterans’ Mental Health Access Act; H.R. 9463, Recruitment Improvement for Service Excellence at VA Hospitals Act; H.R. 9485, Enhancing Faith-Based Support for Veterans Act of 2024; H.R. 9438, No Wrong Door for Veterans Act; H.R. 9324, Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act; H.R. 9426, Safeguarding VA’s Healthcare Workforce Act; H.R. 9478, The Veterans Supporting Prosthetics Opportunities and Recreational Therapy Act; H.R. 9525, Service Dogs Assisting Veterans Act; H.R. 9146, Ensuring Continuity in Veterans Health Act; H.R. 7504, Rural Veterans Transportation to Care Act; H.R. 6330, Veterans Sentinel Act; H.R. 8562, Parity for Native Hawaiian Veterans Act; H.R. 6291, Have You Served Act; H.R. 9301, New Mexico Rural Veteran Health Care Access Act; DRAFT, Conflict of Interest Waiver for VA Researchers”

On September 11, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were three witness panels for this hearing.

The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Representative Morgan Luttrell (TX-8); Representative Gabe Vasquez (NM-2); Representative Scott Franklin (FL-18); Representative Marie Gluesenkamp-Perez (WA-3); Representative Keith Self (TX-3); Representative Jill Tokuda (HI-2); Representative Steve Womack (AR-3)

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Assistant Undersecretary for Health, Discovery, Education, and Affiliate Networks, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Matthew Miller, Executive Director, Office of Suicide Prevention, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Ajit Pai, Executive Director, Office of Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Ryan Heiman, Acting Director, Member Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Brian Dempsey, Director of Government Relations, Wounded Warrior Project; Ms. Missy Meyer, Director of Community Integration, America's Warrior Partnership; Mr. Clark Pennington, Chief Operating Officer, The Independence Fund; and Mr. Jon Retzer, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Joint Statement- American Psychological Association, Association of VA Psychologist Leaders, Association of VA Social Workers, National Association of Veterans Affairs Physicians and Dentists, Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs, and Veterans Healthcare Policy Institute; American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, National Association of State Veterans Homes, U.S. Office of Government Ethics, and Rep. Jason Crow.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—"Legislative Hearing on H.R. 214, Veterans' True Choice Act of 2023; H.R. 3176 Veterans Health Care Freedom Act; H.R. 5287, Veterans Access to Direct Primary Care Act; H.R. 8481, Emergency Community Care Notification Time Adjustment Act of 2024; H.R. 10012, to amend title 38, United States Code, to include eyeglass lens fittings in the category of medical services authorized to be furnished to veterans under the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes; H.R. 9924, What Works for Preventing Veteran Suicide Act; H.R. 8347, Improving Menopause Care for Veterans Act; H.R. 6333, Veterans Emergency Care Reimbursement Act; Discussion Draft—Supporting Medical Students and VA Workforce Act; H.R. 10267, Complete the Mission Act of 2024."

On December 17, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were three witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Chairman Mike Bost (Illinois); Representative Celeste Maloy (Utah); Representative Andy Biggs (Arizona); Representative Brian Mast (Florida); Representative Chip Roy (Texas); Representative Greg Steube (Florida); Representative Julia

Brownley (California); Ranking Member Mark Takano (California); and Representative Greg Landsman (Ohio).

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Hillary Peabody, Acting Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Integrated Veteran Care, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Erica Scavella, Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Cole Lyle, Director of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, The American Legion; Mr. Darin Selnick, Senior Veterans Affairs Advisor; Mr. Patrick Murray, Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; and Ms. Mary-Jean “MJ” Burke, First Executive Vice President, National Veterans Affairs Council, American Federation of Government Employees.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Combatting a Crisis: Providing Veterans Access to Life-saving Substance Abuse Disorder Treatment”

On April 18, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ provision of substance use disorder (SUD) treatment both through in-house Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (MHR RTPs) and through community care referrals. The Subcommittee sought to look at how VA evaluates veterans for treatment and whether that treatment meets the often-urgent need for access.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Tamara Campbell, MD, Executive Director, Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Sachin Yende, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Office of Integrated Veteran Care, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Julie Kroviak, MD, Principal Deputy Assistant Inspector General, Healthcare Inspections, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Daniel Elkins, Chief of Staff, The Independence Fund; Mrs. Jen Silva, Chief Program Officer, Wounded Warrior Project; Mr. Thoams B. Sauer, Chief Executive Officer & Owner, Miramar Health; and Mr. Brendan Dowling, Veteran Outreach, Mental Health.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Cohen Veterans Network

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Care Coordination: Assessing Veteran Needs and Improving Outcomes”

On June 13, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) management of its various care coordination programs. Specifically, the Subcommittee sought to look at how the VA assesses veterans’ needs and supports care transitions both within the VA and with community providers or emergency serv-

ices. The hearing also explored the various roles and responsibilities of care coordinators, patient advocates, and case managers and how their functions may need to be adjusted to serve diverse populations such as rural or geriatric veterans.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. M. Christopher Saslo, Ph.D., Assistant Under Secretary for Health/Chief Nursing Officer, Office of Patient Care Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Sachin Yende, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Office of Integrated Veteran Care, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Jennifer Strawn, Ph.D., Deputy Chief Nursing Officer/Executive Director, Office of Nursing Service, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jill Debord, Executive Director, Office of Care Management and Social Work Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Julie Kroviak, MD, Principal Deputy Assistant Inspector General, Healthcare Inspections, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Andrea Sawyer, Advocacy Director, Quality of Life Foundation; Mr. Matt Brady, Director, Complex Case Coordination Program, Wounded Warrior Project; and Mr. Roscoe Butler, Senior Health Policy Advisor, Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA’s Federal Supremacy Initiative: Putting Veterans First”

On September 19, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) multi-year process to standardize their clinical scope of practice standards for over 50 health care specialties. The Subcommittee sought to look at how VA assesses licensure requirements and jurisdiction of care and ensure that all stakeholder concerns are being heard. The Subcommittee also examined potential ways to improve VA’s process and outcomes to ensure safe, quality care is provided to our nation’s veterans.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Jesse Ehrenfeld, MD, President, American Medical Association; Dr. Paul Barney, OD, American Optometric Association; Ms. Janet Setnor, MSN, CRNA, Col (Ret.) USAFR, NC, President Elect, American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology; Dr. Stephen D. McLeod, MD, Chief Executive Officer, American Academy of Ophthalmology; and Dr. Ron Harter, MD, FASA, President-Elect, American Society of Anesthesiologists.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Erica Scavella, MD, FACP, FACHE, Assistant Under Secretary for Health Clinical Services, Chief Medical Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. M. Christopher Saslo, DNS, ARNP- BC, FAANP, Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Patient Care Services, Chief Nursing Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Ethan Kalett, Executive Director, Office of Regulations, Appeals & Policy, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Academy of Family Physicians, American Nurses Association, American Society of Retina Specialists, The American Legion, Nursing Community Coalition, National Conference of State Legislatures, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, American Pharmacists Association, Blinded Veterans Association, Fleet Reserve Association, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, and American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Emerging Therapies: Breakthroughs in the Battle Against Suicide?”

On November 14, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the ongoing research and clinical trials involving psychedelic-assisted therapy for treating PTSD, other mental conditions, and substance use disorder. The Subcommittee sought to hear from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and different stakeholders about the details and results of clinical trials so far, next steps, and how VA is preparing for potential FDA approval of the assisted therapy. The Subcommittee examined the scaling of treatments to veterans nationwide, heard from the researchers in the forefront of this field, and discussed potential dangers or barriers that lay ahead.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Carolyn Clancy, MD, Assistant Under Secretary for Health, Office of Discovery, Education, and Affiliate Networks, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Ilse Wiechers, MD, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Rachel Yehuda, Ph.D., Patient Care Center Director, Bronx Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Sergeant Jonathan Lubecky, USA (Ret.), clinical trial participant; Dr. Frederick Barrett, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research; Mr. Mike Mullette, Chief Operating Officer, Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies- Public Benefit Corporation (MAPS PBC); Dr. Rajeev Ramchand, Ph.D., Co-Director, RAND Epstein Family Veterans Policy Research Institute; Mr. Brett Waters, Co-Founder, Executive Director, Reason for Hope, Co-Founder, Veteran Mental Health Leadership Coalition; and Ms. Juliana Mercer, USMC (Ret.), Director, Veteran Advocacy and Public Policy, Health Breakthrough.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Psychedelic Practitioners Association.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“SSG Fox Suicide Prevention Grants: Saving Veterans’ Lives Through Community Connection”

On December 12, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program, which assists veterans and their fami-

lies by providing veteran-based outreach, veteran suicide prevention services, connections to VA, and additional community resources that provide more encompassing mental health care access. The Subcommittee sought to evaluate the application process to ensure these grants are accessible to the community organizations best suited to help veterans. The Subcommittee heard from grantees about the strengths and shortcomings of the program and discussed how Congress and VA can enhance and expand the grant program beyond the initial pilot phase to reach even more veterans.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Dr. Erica Scavella, MD, Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services, Veterans Health Administration; U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Todd Burnett, PsyD, Senior Consultant for Operations, Suicide Prevention Program, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Missy Myers, Director of Community Integration, America's Warrior Partnership; Mr. Ken Falke, Chairman/Founder, Boulder Crest Foundation; Ms. Joyce King, Project Director, SSG Fox Veterans Suicide Prevention Program, Sheppard Pratt.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: D'Aniello Institute for Veterans & Military Families, Swords to Plowshares, and Wounded Warrior Project.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—"Artificial Intelligence at VA: Exploring its Current State and Future Possibilities"

On February 15, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) artificial intelligence (AI) use-case pipeline, the policy guidelines in place for these initiatives, the alignment of VA policies on AI with executive orders governing AI, and the department's ability to rapidly implement and scale AI solutions and technologies.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Charles Worthington, Chief Technology Officer/Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Gil Alterovitz, Ph.D., Director, VA National Artificial Intelligence Institute, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Carolyn Clancy, M.D., Assistant Under Secretary for Health, Office of Discovery, Education, and Affiliate Networks, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Prashant Natarajan, Author, Topics:

Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning; Gary Velasquez, Chief Executive Officer, Cogitativo; Charles Rockefeller, Co-Founder and Head of Partnerships, CuraPatient; and Dr. David Newman-Toker, M.D., Ph.D., Director, Armstrong Institute Center for Diagnostic Excellence, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Siemens Medical Solutions USA, Inc., Johnson & Johnson, UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences, and SHRM.

Subcommittee Oversight Field Hearing—“Iowa: A Leader in Veteran Healthcare Innovation”

On May 13, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session in Iowa City, Iowa to conduct an oversight field hearing to examine the modern healthcare and services that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) performs across the state of Iowa. The subcommittee discussed the partnerships that VA has forged with local universities, and community-based healthcare providers to assess the unique ways that VHA, in partnership with Iowa providers, serves as an innovator in the healthcare industry for veterans, active-duty servicemembers, and their families. Further, the subcommittee discussed the progress that the University of Iowa, a VA partner, has achieved regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the ophthalmology industry.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Carolyn Clancy, M.D., Assistant Under Secretary for Health, Office of Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Victoria Sharp, M.D., Deputy Chief of Staff, Iowa City VA Healthcare System, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Dr. Mahsaw Mansoor, M.D., Resident, University of Iowa, Department of Ophthalmology; and Mr. Brandon Blankenship, Chief Technology Officer, Pro Circular.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Optometric Association.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“The Continuity of Care: Assessing the Structure of VA’s Healthcare Network”

On June 26, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the oversight, stability, and evolution of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs). The Subcommittee aimed to discuss the administrative structures and practices of VISNs, Veteran Health Administration (VHA) oversight of VISN management and performance, and patient care outcomes to determine where improvements in access to care need to be made.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Alfred “Al” Montoya, Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health Operations, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Ryan Lilly, MPA, Director of the Veterans Integrated Service Network, New England Healthcare System (VISN 1), Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Julie Kroviak, MD, Principal Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Healthcare Inspections, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and The Honorable Kenneth W. Kizer, MD, MPH, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of California Davis School of Medicine.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Alzheimer’s Association and U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Dial 988 +1: Examining the Operations of the Veterans Crisis Line”

On September 18, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) oversight and operations of the Veterans Crisis Line. The Subcommittee explored if VA is ensuring that the Veterans Crisis Line is operating at its full capacity for veterans who use this crucial resource in times of need.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Dr. Matthew Miller, Executive Director, Office of Suicide Prevention, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Christopher Watson, Executive Director, Veterans Crisis Line, Office of Suicide Prevention, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Brad Mills, Deputy Director, Unified Communications Operations, Connectivity & Collaboration Services, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Julie Kroviak, MD, Principal Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Healthcare Inspections, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Inspector General.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Disabled American Veterans, and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Life After Limb Loss: Examining VA Amputee Prosthetics Care”

On November 20, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) ability to care for veterans in need of amputee prosthetics who suffered amputation during or after their military service. The Subcommittee also examined recent alleged failures in the prosthetics departments and examine whether direct VA amputee care and care in the community are ensuring veteran amputees are all receiving quality care from VA.

There were two witness panels for this hearing. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Dr. Christopher Saslo, DNS, APRN-BC, FAANP, Assistant Under Secretary for Patient Care Services/Chief Nursing Officer, Veterans Health Administration, Dr. Joel Scholten, Executive Director, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Veterans Health Administration; Dr. Ajit Pai, Executive Director, Office of Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services, Veterans Health Administration, and Mr. J. Drew Craig, Design Chief, Enterprise Measurement and Design Directorate, Veterans Experience Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Jose Ramos, Vice President of Government and Community Relations, Wounded Warrior Project; Ms. Ashlie White, Chief Strategy and Programs Officer, Amputee Coalition; and Mr. Matt Brown, U.S. Army Veteran, The Independence Fund.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: U.S. Government Accountability Office, The American Legion, and Mr. Scott Restivo.

ROUNDTABLES

Subcommittee Roundtable—“Federal Supremacy”

On April 26, 2023, the Subcommittee conducted a roundtable to educate Members about the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Federal Supremacy Project. The Subcommittee heard from different stakeholders about their professional perspectives on the process behind the development of the national standards and what it means for VA patient care.

In attendance were: Mr. Ethan Kalett, Senior Advisor for Regulations and Policy, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Sallie Massarsky, Director of Regulations and Policy, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Gerald E. Harmon, M.D., Board Chair and Former President, American Medical Association; Colonel Janet L. Setnor, CRNA, Vice President, American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology; Dr. Richard Castillo, O.D., D.O., Co-Chair, Contemporary Practice Task Force, American Optometric Association; Dr. Suzanne S. Blaylock, M.D., Delegate, American Society of Anesthesiologists; Mr. W. Take Heuer, Vice President of Federal Advocacy, American Academy of PAs; and Dr. Mary Gilbert Lawrence, M.D., M.P.H., Medical Director for Governmental Affairs, Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology.

Subcommittee Roundtable—“Emerging Therapies”

On June 5, 2023, the Subcommittee conducted a roundtable on “Emerging Therapies” regarding psychedelic-assisted therapy clinical trials that are ongoing at universities and VA medical centers across the country.

In attendance were: Dr. Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D., Assistant Under Secretary for Health, Office of Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Christopher Bever, M.D., Director, Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development, VA Maryland Health Care System, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Miriam Smyth, Ph.D., Acting Director, Clinical Science Research, & Development, Office of Research & Development, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Stephen Ross, M.D., Associate Director, Psychedelic Medicine Research Training Program, New York University Langone Health Center for Psychedelic Medicine; Dr. Kelley O’Donnell, M.D., Ph.D., Director Clinical Training, Center for Psychedelic Medicine, New York University Langone Health Center for Psychedelic Medicine; Dr. Frederick Barrett, Ph.D., Associate Professor for Psychiatry and Behavior Sciences, Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research; Dr. Sandeep Nayak, M.D., Assistant Professor for Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research; Mr. Mike Mullette, Chief Operating Officer, Multidisciplinary Associate for Psychedelic Studies-Public Benefit Corporation (MAPS-PBC); Honorable Mimi Walters, Chairwoman, Apollo Pact; Ms. Juliana Mercer, USMC, Director, Veteran Advocacy and Public Policy, Healing Breakthrough; and Mr. Jonathan M. Lubecky, USA (Ret.), Veteran clinical trial participant.

Subcommittee Roundtable—“Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program (Fox Grants)”

On September 6, 2023, the Subcommittee conducted a roundtable to discuss the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program. The purpose of the roundtable was to bring together different stakeholders to examine the Fox Grants strengths and shortcomings and to evaluate the application process to ensure a better understanding of how to make these grants effective for veterans and their families.

In attendance were: Dr. Todd Burnett, Senior Consultant, Operations, Suicide Prevention Program, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Sandra Foley, Director, Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon (SSG) Fox Suicide Prevention Grants Program (SPGP), Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Missy Meyer, Director of Community Integration, America’s Warrior Partnership; Mr. Josh Goldberg, Chief Executive Officer, Boulder Crest Foundation; Ms. Sarah Norman, Chief of Community Development, Sheppard Pratt Health System; Ms. Joyce King, Program Director, SSG Fox SPGP, Sheppard Pratt Health System; and Mr. Jared Sussman, Analyst in Health Policy, Congressional Research Service.

SITE VISITS

Orlando, Florida. On February 15–17, 2023, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff conducted a site visit to the Orlando VA Medical Center and surrounding facilities. Staff met with medical center leadership and visited multiple clinics and the community living center. While at the medical center, staff met with AFGE employees and discussed work conditions in the facility. Oversight also included a visit to the Orlando vet center and satellite office campus for the Office of Community Care to monitor the Well Hive self-scheduling pilot program.

New York, New York. On April 4–6, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted a site visit to the Bronx and Manhattan VA Medical Centers, as well as New York University’s Langone Hospital. Staff met with VA medical center leadership and visited select clinics within the facilities, including the psychedelic research centers and prosthetics centers. Staff also met with New York University’s Langone Center for Psychedelic Medicine, toured the facility, and spoke with their leading researchers. Minority staff joined the NYU portion via teleconference.

Laredo, Texas. On April 20–22, 2023 the Subcommittee majority and communications staff travelled with Chairman Bost to conduct an oversight visit focused on veteran support operations at or near the US southern border. The Chairman visited the Laredo Vet Center and travelled to Eagle Pass to meet with Border Patrol Agents, view operations, and discuss the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Del Rio Sector Partnership and VA outreach.

Baltimore, Maryland. On May 5, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted a visit to Johns Hopkins University Psychedelic and Consciousness Research Center to gather information on clinical trials involving psychedelics with patients who have PTSD and

substance abuse disorder. We met with leading researchers in the field and toured their facility.

Phoenix, Arizona. On June 14, 2023, majority and minority staff participated in a Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Senior Leader Summit in Phoenix, AZ. Together with majority and minority staff from the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, they appeared on a panel to discuss their respective legislative and oversight priorities for the 118th Congress, and responded to questions from VHA senior executives.

Loma Linda, California. On June 15, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted a site visit to Loma Linda VA Medical Center with majority staff from the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee. Staff toured the facility and discussed geriatric care, suicide prevention, policing, and community care. Staff conducted whistleblower interviews regarding workplace rights..

Phoenix, Payson, Flagstaff, and Prescott, Arizona. On August 14–18, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff led oversight visits, along with other Committee majority staff, to various locations within the Phoenix VA Health Care System (PVAHCS) and the Northern Arizona VA Health Care System (NAVAHCS) catchment areas. In addition to meeting with leadership at both the Phoenix and Prescott VAMCs, oversight focused on emergency care, women's health, substance abuse and mental health inpatient rehabilitation (MH RRTP), and community care operations both at the medical centers and their affiliated CBOCs. Committee staff also participated in veteran forums in Payson, Flagstaff and at the Navajo Nation. Finally, staff visited with the leadership team from US Vets and visited the workforce area, living areas, and dining facility.

Winchester, Virginia. On August 29, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted a site visit to the Winchester, Virginia, VA clinic. Staff toured the facility and spoke with leadership about rural health, telehealth, and hiring and retention issues.

Tomah, Wisconsin. On October 11, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff led an oversight visit along with majority staff from the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee to the Tomah VA Medical Center. After participating in various leadership huddles, staff focused on discussions with clinicians located in community care, urgent care, the mental health residential rehabilitation unit (MH RRTP), the proposed women's health clinic, and the whole health clinic. The visit concluded with a review of various quality metric evaluations.

Las Vegas, Nevada. On October 26, 2023, the Subcommittee majority and Senate minority staff conducted a site visit to North Las Vegas VA Medical Center. Staff met with VA clinicians within the inpatient ward, emergency department, prosthetics, and the VA Southern Nevada Fisher House. Staff also toured the Northeast Primary Care Clinic. Majority and minority staff, along with majority and minority staff from the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, participated in a Nurses Organization of VA (NOVA) conference panel on October 27, 2023. They presented their respective legislative and oversight priorities for the 118th Congress and responded to questions from VA nurses in attendance at the conference.

Las Vegas, NV. On November 26, 2023, House majority and Senate minority staff conducted a site visit to North Las Vegas VA Medical Center. Staff met with VA clinicians within the inpatient ward, emergency department, and prosthetics departments, and visited the VA Southern Nevada Fisher House. Staff also toured the Northeast Primary Care Clinic. Staff participated in a Nurses Organization of VA (NOVA) conference panel on November 27, 2023.

Lyons, NJ; East Orange, NJ. Between February 26 to 27, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff as well as local district staff visited the Lyons VA Medical Center and East Orange VA Medical Center to tour the facilities and discuss ongoing challenges related to infrastructure, staffing, and access to care. The visit also included an in-depth review of specialized programs, such as women's health initiatives, mental health services, and the PACT Act outreach efforts, along with an examination of the facilities' partnerships with community providers and Rutgers University.

Tucson, AZ. On March 13 to 15, 2024, majority staff from the Health and Economic Opportunity Subcommittees travelled to Tucson, Arizona, to meet with staff and researchers at the University of Arizona, who are also affiliated with the Tucson VA Medical Center, regarding their research on mental health and vaccinations and preventative health measures. Staff also learned about the University's education and transition services.

West Palm Beach, Florida. On March 25 to 26, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff as well as local Congressional staff visited the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center to tour the facility and meet with leadership regarding Congressional office space issues faced by members of Congress. Additionally, staff investigated a recent veteran homicide at a mental health unit on campus.

Iowa City, IA; La Crosse and Tomah, WI; Rochester and Minneapolis, MN. Between August 11 and 16, 2024 majority staff from the Health, Technology Modernization, and Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittees travelled to Iowa City, IA; La Crosse and Tomah, WI; and Rochester and Minneapolis, MN to conduct oversight of VA Medical Centers, Community Based Outpatient Clinics, Vet Centers, and other veterans support initiatives. Staff met with leadership and staff at all these facilities to conduct oversight of their operations. Of note, Staff were able to discuss the findings of an Administrative Investigations Board Report with Rep. Van Orden and the Executive Leadership Team regarding an incident at the Tomah facility.

Detroit, Michigan. On September 4, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff visited the John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) in Detroit, Michigan with Representative John James and members of his staff to conduct oversight over the facility's implementation of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA's) voter registration program as required by Executive Order (EO) 14019, discuss the facility's progress in addressing the recommendations from a July 2023 VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) report about senior leadership failures regarding care quality, learn about the facility's plans to open a new Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in Rep. James' district, and dis-

cuss the facility's preparedness for the potential implementation of the Oracle Cerner Electronic Health Record (EHR).

Virginia Beach, Virginia. On October 10 to 11, 2024, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff visited Virginia Beach to participate in the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA) conference's panel titled "118th Congress VA Legislation/Policy Wrap Up." Additionally, majority staff briefly visited a state veterans' home in Virginia Beach, which was recently approved for VA funding, to discuss its mission and how VA could be most helpful moving forward.

Miami, Florida. On October 28, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff went on an oversight visit to the Key Largo VA Clinic and the Homestead VA Clinic and met with facility leadership. During the visit, the leadership team provided staff with details on current challenges with aging facilities in the Miami region. Staff toured the facilities and discussed the challenges of leasing a new Homestead clinic location. After the visits, staff engaged in a veteran's roundtable with Rep. Gimenez and his constituents.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

JEN KIGGANS, Virginia, *Chairman*

FRANK MRVAN, Indiana, *Ranking Member*

AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN,
American Samoa

JACK BERGMAN, Michigan

MATT ROSENDALE, Montana

CHRIS PAPPAS, New Hampshire

TIMOTHY KENNEDY, New York ⁴

THOMAS FINNIGAN III, *Majority Staff Director*

Ally Cimino, *Minority Staff Director*

⁴ On September 10, 2024, Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick resigned her position on the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, and Representative Timothy Kennedy joined the Subcommittee.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Markup. On July 19, 2023, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 592, Department of Veterans Affairs Electronic Health Record Modernization Improvement Act; H.R. 608, To Terminate the Electronic Health Record Modernization Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 1659, Department of Veterans Affairs IT Modernization Improvement Act; H.R. 2499, VA Supply Chain Management System Authorization Act; H.R. 4278, Restore Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Act; H.R. 196, Expediting Temporary Ratings for Veterans Act; H.R. 4461, Modernizing Department of Veteran Affairs Disability Benefit Questionnaires Act; H.R. 3504, VA Medical Center Security Report Act; H.R. 2733, Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General Training Act; and H.R. 4225, VA Acquisition Review Board Act. H.R. 196, H.R. 4461, H.R. 1659, H.R. 608, H.R. 592, H.R. 4225, H.R. 4278, and H.R. 2733 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 3504 and H.R. 2499 were ordered reported by voice vote, as amended.

Subcommittee Markup. On April 17, 2024, the Subcommittee held a markup on H.R. 6452, Veterans Scam and Fraud Evasion Act of 2023; H.R. 6531 TRAIN VA Employees Act; H.R. 6538, VA Correct Compensation Act of 2023; H.R. 6874, VA WEB Act; H.R. 6947, Veterans Affairs Centennial and Heritage Act of 2024; H.R. 7342, Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2024; H.R. 7713, VA Political Performance Disclosure Act; and H.R. 7734, To Amend Title 38, United States Code, to Require a Notation in the Personnel Record File of Certain Employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs Who Resign from Government Employment Under Certain Circumstances. H.R. 6538, H.R. 6874, H.R. 7342, H.R. 7713, H.R. 6531, and H.R. 6947 were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 6452 and H.R. 7734, were ordered reported by voice vote to Full Committee, as amended.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 592, Department of Veterans Affairs Electronic Health Record Modernization Improvement Act; H.R. 608, To Terminate the Electronic Health Record Modernization Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 1658, Manage VA Act; H.R. 1659, Department of Veterans Affairs IT Modernization Improvement Act; and H.R. 2499, VA Supply Chain Management System Authorization Act”

On April 19, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Phillip Christy, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Catherine Cravens, Chief of Staff, Office of Information Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Leslie Sofocleous, Executive Director, Program Management Office, Electronic Health Record Modernization, Integration Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Af-

fairs; Ms. Shana Love-Holmon, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Enterprise Integration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Shelby Oakley, Director, Contracting and National Security Acquisitions, Government Accountability Office.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Fleet Reserve Association and The American Legion.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 4278, Restore Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Act; H.R. 196, Expediting Temporary Ratings for Veterans Act; H.R. 4461, Modernizing Department of Veteran Affairs Disability Benefit Questionnaires Act; H.R. 3504, VA Medical Center Security Report Act; H.R. 2733, Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General Training Act; and H.R. 4225, VA Acquisition Review Board Act”

On July 12, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Lewis Ratchford, Chief Security Officer, Office of Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security, and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Rondy Waye, Executive Director, Human Capital Programs, Office of Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security, and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Ray Tellez, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Automated Benefits Delivery, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Angela Billups, Ph.D., Executive Director, Office of Acquisitions and Logistics, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. David Case, Deputy Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Joshua Hastings, Veterans Benefits Policy Analyst, The American Legion; Mr. Patrick Murray, Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mr. Clint Romesha, SSG (ret.), Board of Director, Emeritus, America’s Warrior Partnership; and Ms. Terry Gerton, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Academy of Public Administration.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Federation of Government Employees, AFL–CIO, Concerned Veterans of America, National Federation of Federal Employees, Partnership for Public Service, Senior Executives Association, and United Nurses Association of California/Union of Health Care Professionals.

Subcommittee Legislative Hearing—“Legislative Hearing on H.R. 6452, Veterans Scam and Fraud Evasion Act; H.R. 6531, TRAIN VA Employees Act; H.R. 6538, VA Correct Compensation Act; H.R. 6874, VA WEB Act; H.R. 6947, Veterans Affairs Centennial and Heritage Act; H.R. 7342, Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act; H.R. 7765, VA Security Screening Pilot Program Act; H.R. 7734, Required Notation of Investigation in Personnel Record File Act; and H.R. 7713, VA Political Performance Disclosure Act”

On March 21, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct a legislative hearing on the above bills. There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. John W. Boerstler, Chief Veterans Experience Officer, Office of Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security, and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Tracey Therit, Chief Human Capital Officer, Office of Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security, and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. David Perry, Chief Officer, Workforce Management and Consulting, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Charles Worthington, Chief Technology Officer, Office of Information Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Joycelyn Westbrook, RN, Secretary-Treasurer, AFGE Local 1633, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Paralyzed Veterans of America, American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, National Federation of Federal Employees/Service Employees International Union, Rep. Williams, Senior Executives Association, Rep. Turner, and United Nurses Associations of California/Union Health Care Professionals.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Accountability at VA: Leadership Decisions Impacting its Employees and Veterans”

On March 9, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine how VA leaders, and their employees, are held accountable to the Veterans they serve. Members had the opportunity to ask questions about VA’s Human Resources Office. The hearing’s goal was to examine if the policies and systems VA has in place foster accountability within VA and, if they do not, how they can be improved.

There was one witness panel. The witness on the first and only panel was the following: Ms. Tracey Therit, Chief Human Capital Officer, Human Resources Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Federation of Government Employees, AFL–CIO.

Joint Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VHA Recruitment and Retention: Is Bureaucracy Holding Back a Quality Workforce?”

On May 17, 2023, the Subcommittees on Oversight and Investigations and Health met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) and Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA’s) workforce. The subcommittees looked at VA’s recruitment, retention, and relocation efforts over the past year, with particular emphasis on legislative authorities that were enacted in the 117th Congress. The hearing also provided the subcommittees an opportunity to examine VHA’s organizational “modernization” of its Human Resource functions and its impact on the ability to adequately support Medical Center needs. Another goal of the hearing was to look at the effectiveness of VHA in retaining its workforce, to include equitable implementation of educational incentives and other benefits unique to federal employment.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Ms. Tracey Therit, Chief Human Capital Officer, Human Resources Administration/ Operations, Security and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jessica Bonjorni, MBA, PMP, SPHR, Chief of Human Capital Management, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Sharon Silas, Director of Health Care Team, Government Accountability Office.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Mary Jane “MJ” Burke, First Executive Vice President, AFGE National VA Council; Dr. Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, NEA BC, FAAN, Senior Vice President of Workforce, American Hospital Association; Mr. Will Morse, Corporate Vice President of Solution Design and Sales, AMN Healthcare; and Ms. Kelley Saindon, DNP, RN NE-BC, CHPN, Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Procurement: Made in America”

On September 20, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine how VA’s procurement practices and the reasons why more progress has not been made. The subcommittee sought to investigate why very little appeared to have been accomplished to boost domestic purchases during the Biden Administration, particularly in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, which is the second largest buyer in the federal government.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Michael D. Parrish, Principal Executive Director and Chief Acquisition Officer, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Angela Billups, Executive Director and Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Andrew Centineo, Executive Director for Procurement and Logistics, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Thomas Emmendorfer, Executive Director

for Pharmacy Benefits Management Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Representative Matt Rosendale (Montana).

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Trust in Transparency: Holding VA Accountable and Protecting Whistleblowers”

On November 2, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the whistleblower protections and reporting avenues available to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employees and the veterans they serve. The subcommittee sought to examine VA and its Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection’s (OAWP’s) progress in addressing the subcommittee’s concerns raised during its 2019 and 2021 hearings about VA whistleblowers.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Bruce P. Gipe, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Eric Calhoun, Director, Investigations Division, Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Ted Radway, Executive Director, Investigations and Acting Executive Director, Compliance and Oversight Directorate, Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Emilie Collier, Chief, Investigation and Prosecution Division, Office of Special Counsel; and Mr. Thomas Costa, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security, Government Accountability Office.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Tristan Leavitt, President, Empower Oversight; Ms. Samantha Feinstein, International Director and Staff Attorney, Government Accountability Project; Mr. Joe Speilberger, Policy Counsel, Project on Government Oversight; and Mr. Paul Pearson, Vice President, Whistleblowers of America.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Whistleblowers of America.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Background Checks: Are VA’s HR Failures Risking Drug Abuse and Veteran Harm?”

On December 6, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine VA’s personnel suitability program governance with a particular focus on how VA ensures employees with felony drug convictions are properly identified.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Jessica Bonjoni, Chief, Human Capital Management, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Shawn Steele, Director of the Healthcare Infrastructure Division, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Seto Bagdoyan, Director for Audit Services, Forensic Audits & Investigative Service, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and Mr. Daniel Galik, Executive Director for Identity Credential and Access Management, Office of Human Resources and Administra-

tion/Operations, Security and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Revolving Funds: Are Veterans Being Shortchanged?”

On January 17, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine VA’s two large revolving funds, the Franchise Fund and the Supply Fund, that provide services to VA offices and other agencies on a fee-for-service basis. Together, they have assets exceeding \$1.7 billion. The Subcommittee discovered that the Supply Fund operated at a loss in fiscal year 2023 and individual enterprises within the Franchise Fund routinely operate at a loss. The Subcommittee sought to question whether the Financial Services Center was best equipped to process payments for veterans’ community care, most of which were transferred to the VA Office of Integrated Veteran Care when the Biden Administration reorganized community care in 2021.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Teresa Riffel, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Management Business Transformation, Financial Management Business Transformation Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Leroy Larkins, Executive Director, Office of Revolving Funds, Office of Management, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Phillip Christy, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Julie Matta, Deputy General Counsel, U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Ensuring VA’s Security: How Can Congress Best Support VA’s Law Enforcement?”

On May 16, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to explore different ways for Congress to effectively support the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Police and provide oversight to ensure VA is adequately supporting its Police Officers to serve and protect.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Alfred, Montoya, Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health Operations, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Troy Brown, Senior Security Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Brandy Soto, Chief of Police, Little Rock, Arkansas Veterans Affairs Medical Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. George Chester, Chief of Police, Detroit, Michigan Veterans Affairs Medical Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Bryan Hunt, President, AFGE Local #2384.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Kapua Conley, Regional President, Sentara Healthcare System, Hampton, Virginia; Mr. Chuck Dowd, Vice President, Public Safety Broadband Technology Association, Las Vegas, Nevada; and Mr. Jon Retzer, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Accountability: What Has Happened to Hampton?”

On September 24, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the alleged and substantiated misconduct within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hampton Medical Center (Hampton VA). Whistleblowers alleged the Hampton VA Chief of Surgery was a poor leader who retaliated against those who reported patient safety concerns and failed to act against medical professionals who were clinically inept. Whistleblowers also alleged Hampton VA leadership did not adequately address the whistleblowers’ concerns and poorly managed the facility. The whistleblowers alleged this ineffective leadership led to internal employee disputes, workplace harassment, and facility cleanliness issues. As a result, many providers have left the facility.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Paul S. Crews, Veterans Integrated Services Network 6 Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Frederick Kotler, MD, Interim Medical Inspector, Office of the Medical Inspector, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Walt C. Dannenberg, Acting Executive Director, VA Hampton Health Care, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Jennifer Baptiste, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Healthcare Inspections, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology.

SITE VISITS

Columbia, South Carolina. On February 3, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted a site visit to the Columbia Regional Office and Columbia VA Medical Center. Staff met with VBA and VAMC leadership and took a tour of the facilities, including the medical center’s Women’s Clinic. The visit included continued oversight of PACT Act implementation. Staff also met with representatives from the local AFGE about their relationship with regional office leadership. Minority staff joined for a briefing that provided an overview of the medical center and the progress it has made.

Hampton, Virginia. On April 12, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff visited Hampton VA Medical Center with Chairwoman Kiggans and her team. Staff visited Hampton VAMC in part, because it was ranked 134 out of 141 VA Medical Centers in the 2022 All Employee Survey. The Hampton VA has overseen a steady increase in veterans utilizing its care. Therefore, leadership argued they need a new facility to meet demand. Chairwoman Kiggans stressed the need to follow up on the development of VA facilities in and around Virginia Beach. Majority staff also met with student veterans at Old Dominion University where student veterans discussed the need for better access to mental health care and improved on campus VA liaison services. Chairwoman Kiggans and Majority staff also hosted a town hall where veterans focused on the need for adequate care including accessibility to the East Shore Rural Health System as part of the Community Care program.

Loma Linda, California. On June 15, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff met with personnel from different Loma Linda VA departments. Majority staff met with leadership to discuss geriatric care. Loma Linda clinical staff discussed the need for a greater financial investment in geriatric care infrastructure. On June 16th, Rep. Obernolte of California joined majority staff on a visit to the medical center and toured the facility with local leadership. Before the tour, Mr. Obernolte and majority staff discussed various disciplinary actions with Loma Linda leadership. Additionally, majority staff met with whistleblowers to discuss Loma Linda VA waste, fraud, and abuse, and whistleblower retaliation.

San Diego, California. On August 14, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted a site visit to Jennifer Moreno VA Medical Center in San Diego. Staff met with Community Care, Police, GEC, Supply Chain, and Mental Health and Emergency Department leadership. Community Care leadership shared with staff that their biggest challenge involves medical records and the lack of coordination from community partners. During the staff's meeting with police leadership, the Police Chief explained the jurisdictional issues VA police have when responding to calls. For example, leadership explained how VA police would not be able to take action without extensive coordination and approval if an individual committing disorderly conduct or experiencing behavioral health challenges left the facility's immediate boundaries.

Loma Linda, California. On August 15–16, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff met with a former VA official to discuss whistleblower protections and problems VA whistleblowers in California are experiencing. Staff also met with individuals who raised concerns about patient safety and employment issues at VA facilities in Loma Linda. Staff was able to identify core issues facing patients and employees at VA Loma Linda, which have led to ongoing investigations.

Palo Alto, California. On August 17, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted an oversight trip to the Palo Alto Veteran Affairs Medical Center. Majority staff met with the acting Medical Center Director and senior VA leaders of the following offices and programs: Finance, Police and Security, Supply Chain, Geriatrics, and the Office of Facilities. Staff had the opportunity to tour the largest multidisciplinary rehabilitation building in the VA Health Care System. O&I also met with supply chain leadership to discuss corrective actions since the VA OIG report on the facility's purchase card misuse. Leadership assured staff that there have been systemic changes to inventory and supply management to ensure financial efficiency.

San Francisco, California. On August 18, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff conducted an oversight visit to the San Francisco Veteran Affairs Medical Center. Staff met with the Medical Center Director and leadership from the following offices and programs: Social Work, HUD/VASH, and the Police Force. Medical Center leadership informed staff during the visit that there are 196 residencies through a University of California San Francisco School of Medicine partnership. San Francisco VA has one of the largest funded research programs in VHA, with \$84.3 million in research expenditures in FY2022. O&I visited the new Memory Care unit

within the Community Living Center. The Center houses 14 single-bed units that integrate construction with minimal risk of triggering unsafe behaviors in a quiet and decluttered atmosphere with reassuring sensory interventions.

Tomah, Wisconsin. On October 10, 2023, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and Health majority staff conducted an oversight visit to the Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center. O&I and Health traveled to Tomah, WI, to meet with the Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) executive leadership and VISN 12 representatives, including the VISN 12 Director. During the visit, the facility leadership team provided staff with details on current initiatives and challenges at the VAMC. Staff had the opportunity to observe both clinical and administrative team huddles, tour newly constructed facilities, and engage with employees from multiple health service departments who provide daily services to veterans. Finally, staff met with representatives from the local AFGE union.

St. Petersburg, Florida. On November 6, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff traveled to Florida to conduct oversight visits at the VA Tampa and Bay Pines VA Healthcare Systems. Staff assessed operations at the North Pinellas VA Clinic, the C.W. Bill Young VAMC in St. Petersburg, the Bay Pines National Cemetery, and was joined by the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity majority staff to visit the James A. Haley VAMC in Tampa, Tampa VA Domiciliary and St. Petersburg Regional Office. Staff from the offices of Rep. Anna Paulina Luna (R-FL-13), who represents most of St. Petersburg, and Rep. Laurel Lee (R-FL-15), who represents most of Tampa, were present during the visit to the VAMC's in their respective districts. During the visits to the medical centers and the national cemetery, committee staff were briefed on ongoing initiatives and current challenges. Staff also met with AFGE representatives at the James A. Haley VAMC and at C.W. Bill Young VAMC. The St. Petersburg Regional Office briefed O&I and EO staff on challenges related to the Veteran Readiness and Employment office.

Northport, New York. On November 29, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff traveled to Northport, NY to conduct an oversight visit of the Northport VAMC on Long Island. Staff was joined by staff from the offices of Representative LaLota (R-NY-01), Representative Garbarino (R-NY-02), and Representative D'Esposito (R-NY-04). Staff assessed operations at the medical center and conducted oversight based on the Committee's 2016 and 2017 investigations into the aging infrastructure at Northport VAMC. The campus is 277 acres and has far too many buildings, many of them vacant, to match its current patient volume. Staff found that while there are many buildings that remain in disrepair and there are several capital improvement projects that have yet to be funded, the medical center has completed or is in the process of completing a number of significant projects addressing the major deficiencies that were identified by the Committee in 2017 and in a 2014 facility condition assessment. An updated facility condition assessment was conducted earlier in 2023 and the facility stated that they expect it to be published in late 2023 or early 2024.

Atlanta and Augusta, Georgia. On December 11 to 13, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff traveled to Georgia, VISN 7, to conduct oversight visits within the Augusta and Atlanta VA Healthcare systems. The visit included visiting two medical centers, the Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans' Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, GA and the Joseph Maxwell Cleland Medical Center in Atlanta, GA, and the Cobb County Multispecialty Clinic in Marietta, GA. Additionally, subcommittee staff met with individuals off-site who shared concerns about their respective facilities. Staff from the offices of Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-GA-11), who represents most of Marietta, GA and Rep. Rick Allen (R-GA-12), who represents most of Augusta, were present during the visit to the facilities in their respective districts. During the visits, committee staff were briefed on ongoing initiatives and current challenges. Finally, committee staff met with AFGCE representatives at both the Charlie Norwood and Joseph Maxwell Cleland VAMCs.

Brooklyn, New York. On December 18, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff traveled to Brooklyn, NY to conduct an oversight visit at the Brooklyn VA Medical Center. O&I staff assessed operations and spoke with employees at the facility. Staff from the office of Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY-11), who represents Staten Island and the southern tip of Brooklyn, including the medical facility, also attended the visit. During the visit, committee staff were briefed on ongoing initiatives and current challenges. Staff also met with local AFGCE representatives.

Hampton Beach, Virginia. On March 27, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff traveled to Virginia Beach, VA, to meet with six whistleblowers who work at the Hampton Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Hampton VAMC). Committee staff were also accompanied by two Rep. Jen Kiggans (R-VA-02) staff members. During the visit, Committee staff heard credible allegations, that retaliatory and ineffective leadership from members of the Hampton VAMC leadership may be allowing negligent medical providers to endanger Veterans lives by missing cancer diagnosis, failing to fully remove easily identifiable cancerous masses, and purposefully avoiding patients who require care.

Montrose, New York. On April 18, 2024, the Oversight and Investigations and Health Subcommittees majority staff traveled to Montrose, NY, to conduct an oversight visit at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Hospital. Staff from the Office of Rep. Mike Lawler (R-NY-17), who represents Rockland and Putnam Counties and portions of Westchester and Dutchess County, which includes the medical facility, also attended the visit. Staff assessed operations and spoke with facility leadership and employees. During the visit, staff were also briefed on the facility's ongoing initiatives.

Fayetteville, North Carolina. On April 25, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff as well as local congressional staff were hosted by facility leadership for multiple briefings regarding the services offered at the facility and programs administered by the local VA Medical Center. In FY 2023, the facility treated more than 92,838 Veterans and had more than 850,000 outpatient visits. The demographics are split roughly 80/20 between male and female veterans. According to Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) data, care coordination and provider rating scored

in the “opportunities available” quartile which is below average. Congressional staff received a detailed explanation from leadership and their plan to implement changes to improve care coordination and provider ratings.

Syracuse, New York: On June 21, 2024, the Oversight and Investigations and Health Subcommittees majority staff supported Representative Brandon Williams (R-NY-22) with two events. First, staff visited Clear Path for Veterans, an organization offering comprehensive services such as canine therapy, wellness, career, and culinary programs aimed at empowering veterans. Staff toured the facility, learned about the programs, and discussed Clear Path’s Fox Grant application with leadership who emphasized the success of their meal program. Later, staff attended a veterans’ resource fair hosted by Rep. Williams, alongside VA representatives and local agencies. Attendees had positive feedback about the Syracuse VA Medical Center but raised concerns over the closure of its neurological/spinal unit, which remains under review by the Health Subcommittee.

Denver, Colorado: On July 10 to 12, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff visited the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center and the University of Colorado School of Medicine in Aurora, Colorado, following the release of VA OIG and OMI reports detailing leadership failures and patient safety concerns. During meetings with VISN 19 and Rocky Mountain VAMC leadership, staff discussed the disconnect between the facility and its providers, communication challenges, and the impact on patient care and resident education. The toxic culture at the VAMC led to significant staff turnover, particularly in the ICU and cardiothoracic departments, exacerbated by a hiring freeze. Though facility morale is low, many providers remain committed to the VA’s mission. VISN leadership has faced criticism for inadequate oversight, with leadership changes and ongoing investigations into former leaders. Concerns persist regarding the VISN director’s leadership approach and her awareness of facility issues. Staff recommended continued oversight and engagement with whistleblowers to ensure VA addresses these challenges.

Central Alabama Health Care System: On August 5 to 7, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff visited VA facilities in north Florida, central Alabama, and west Georgia to address concerns raised by the district offices of Representative Neal Dunn (R-FL-02) and Representative Barry Moore (R-AL-02). Key issues included VA appointment delays, community care challenges, and the closure of the Panama City Beach clinic pharmacy, which affects veterans’ access to medications. At the G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VAMC, staff reported fears of retaliation from leadership. The Columbus clinic, the newest in the system, offers comprehensive services and robust security, serving as a model for future facilities. Committee staff has continued to work with Rep. Moore’s staff including sending a Chairman’s letter to the Secretary.

Bakersfield, California: On August 12, 2024, the O&I, Health, and DAMA Subcommittee majority staff participated in a town hall with Representatives Valadao (R-CA-22) and Fong (R-CA-20) where veterans and local stakeholders expressed concerns about lengthy claims processing times, homelessness, and access to care

at VA. Staff then visited the Bakersfield Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), where VA staff highlighted difficulties in utilizing their current space effectively while awaiting a new facility. VA staff also highlighted how the clinic's reliance on outdated medical equipment has hindered the quality of care, and how veterans face challenges accessing the onsite pharmacy, which often resorting to mail-order prescriptions.

Big Sandy Rancheria, California: On August 11, 2024, O&I, Health, and DAMA Subcommittee majority staff visited the Big Sandy Rancheria, where tribal leaders raised concerns about the underuse of their cemetery, that was built in 2016. Additionally, they highlighted issues related to the tribe's responsibility for keeping up maintenance costs. They praised the effectiveness of the National Cemetery Administration's (NCA) national training, which was tailored for tribal staff.

Madera and Oakland, California: On August 12, 2024, O&I, Health, and DAMA Subcommittee majority staff participated in a Representative Duarte (R-CA-13) led town hall and visited the Oakland Regional Office (RO). At the townhall, which occurred in Representative Duarte's district in Madera California, Committee staff were available to assist Representative Durate's constituents with VA related questions. At the Oakland Regional Office, Committee staff listened to claims processing staff who raised concerns about high workforce attrition and training gaps. These issues have negatively impacted the overall quality and timeliness of claims, with the RO currently ranking 27th in performance metrics. Committee staff also heard from Union representatives about reported tensions between leadership and staff. Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA) RO leadership explained that to fix these concerns, the facility implemented a mentor system, where a senior Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) and Rating Veteran Service Representatives (RVSRs) are paired with junior staff.

Hampton, Virginia. On August 26 to 28, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff and Health minority staff conducted a site visit to the Hampton VA Medical Center. The purpose of this trip was to obtain a perspective on concerns that have been raised about facilities management, credentialing and privileging, risk management, recruitment and retention, and quality management at the facility, ahead of future oversight hearings on the topic.

Buffalo, New York: On August 29, 2024, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff traveled to Buffalo NY to visit the Buffalo Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center (Buffalo VAMC) after learning the facility poorly managed oncology referrals made to the community, which led to veterans receiving delayed care. Committee staff's goal was to talk with Buffalo VAMC employees and VISN 2 leadership to better understand how the poor management occurred and what the facility was currently doing to not only correct previous errors, but ensure similar mistakes are not repeated.

New York City, New York. On September 15 to 16, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff conducted a site visit at two medical facilities in New York City: the Bronx VA Medical Center and the Manhattan VA Medical Center. The purpose of this trip was to provide oversight of operations at the Bronx and Manhattan VAMCs

as it relates to clinical and nonclinical staff, police and security efforts, and IT modernization projects.

Los Angeles, California: On September 30 to October 2, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff conducted a site visit to the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center. The purpose of this trip was to provide an oversight of operations at the Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, specifically regarding veteran homelessness, VA police, supply chain, and community relations. Staff met with veterans and various community officials, stakeholders, partners, and providers who will engage in services for regional veterans.

Rocky Point, New York: On October 15, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff participated in a veteran roundtable hosted by Representative LaLota (R-NY-01) in Rocky Point, New York. Roundtable participants included veteran leaders from local Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), Suffolk County New York Community leaders, Rep. LaLota staff, and committee staff. The roundtable addressed several pressing issues impacting the local veteran community, and veterans nationally, including mental health care, housing, healthcare, the Northport VA Medical Center (Northport VAMC), and state veterans' homes. The visit's goals were to: (1) learn the local veteran population's opinion on major veteran topics including mental health challenges, access to healthcare services at the Northport VAMC, housing concerns, and the support level veterans get from state veterans' homes; and (2) support Representative LaLota with subject matter expertise. After the roundtable, staff accepted an invitation to tour the Long Island State Veterans Home.

Hempstead, New York: On October 21, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff participated in a veteran town hall hosted by Representative Anthony D'Esposito (R-NY-04) in Hempstead, New York. The event allowed veterans, leaders of local veteran service organizations (VSOs), and local stakeholders to share their concerns on issues impacting veterans living in Rep. D'Esposito's district. During the town hall, committee staff engaged with veterans, local VSO leaders, and community stakeholders to hear about issues impacting veterans in Representative D'Esposito's district. Attendees raised concerns about access to VA benefits, healthcare, and employment counseling, as well as homelessness among veterans. Attendees were also interested in hearing more about Congress's work combating antisemitism at the VA.

Mountain Home Tennessee: On October 30, 2024, the Subcommittee majority staff traveled to Mountain Home, Tennessee to conduct oversight at the James H. Quillen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Mountain Home VAMC) to further the Committee's investigation into sexual harassment, sexual assault, and inappropriate relationship allegations at the facility. Travel to the Mountain Home VAMC was necessary as VA would not provide the Committee with requested information regarding the many serious allegations. Committee staff's goal was to talk to VISN, facility, and police leadership to gain a better understanding of how the allegations were reported and addressed.

Atlantic City, New Jersey: On October 30, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff traveled to Atlantic City, New Jersey to participate in the New Jersey Veterans Housing Symposium. Staff

discussed issues that New Jersey VSOs and homeless service providers face in constructing new permanent supportive housing for homeless veterans in the region. Staff also heard directly from VA staff about how they are improving the Veteran Justice Outreach program to further serve veterans who have cases before the area Veterans Treatment Courts.

Wappingers Falls, New York: On December 10, 2024, Committee staff traveled to Wappingers Falls, New York to conduct oversight at the Castle Point VA Medical Center. Staff assessed operations, spoke with facility leadership and employees, and toured the facility. Staff also met with facility union employees to gain insight into the challenges union employees are currently facing.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION

MATT ROSENDALE, Montana, *Chair*

SHEILA CHERFILUS MCCORMICK, Florida, *Ranking Member*

NANCY MACE, South Carolina

TIM KENNEDY, New York ⁵

KEITH SELF, Texas

WILLIAM MALLISON, *Majority Staff Director*

JOHN HARRY, *Minority Staff Director*

⁵On September 10, 2024, Representative Greg Landsman resigned his position on the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization, and Representative Tim Kennedy joined the Subcommittee.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VistA: the Good, the Bad, and the Misunderstood”

On March 7, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine VistA’s strengths and weaknesses as well as explore its attributes, which are commonly misunderstood. The Subcommittee discussed how VA will operate and maintain VistA while the Oracle Cerner implementation is ongoing and the likelihood that the Department will continue relying on VistA for many years.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Mr. Daniel McCune, Executive Director of Software Product Management, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Charles Hume, Chief Informatics Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Thomas O’Toole, M.D., Deputy Assistant Undersecretary for Health for Clinical Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Zhuchun “Emily” Qui, Director of Health Informatics, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and Mr. Michael Giurbino, Director of Health Infrastructure and Systems Management, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: the Honorable Roger Baker; the Honorable James Gfrerer; and Mr. Peter L. Levin.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Electronic Health Record Modernization Deep Dive: Pharmacy”

On May 9, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Oracle Cerner electronic health record (EHR) system’s pharmacy functions, including changes and enhancements that were completed in February and April 2023. The Subcommittee sought to discuss the VA’s April 21 announcement that will halt future deployments of the Oracle Cerner EHR while prioritizing improvements at the five sites currently using the system, as part of a larger program reset.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Neil Evans, M.D., Acting Program Executive Director, Electronic Health Record Modernization Integration Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Thomas Emmendorfer, Pharm.D., Executive Director, Pharmacy Benefits Management Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Silverman, Pharm.D., Chairman, Pharmacy Council, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Carol Harris, Director, Information Technology and Cybersecurity, Government Accountability Office; Mr. Mike Sicilia, Executive Vice President, Global Industries, Oracle; and Mr. James Ellzy, M.D., Vice President, Federal, Health Executive, Oracle.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Information Technology Contracting: Challenges in Consolidation of Competition and Conflict of Interest”

On May 24, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine trends in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) information technology contracting including increasing spending, a consolidating contractor/supplier base, and procurement methods that limit the pool of eligible companies. The Subcommittee also considered VA’s management of organizational conflicts of interest among current and prospective contractors.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Shelby Oakley, Director, Contracting and National Security Acquisitions, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and Ms. Hana Schank, Senior Advisor, New America.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“The Status of VA Financial Management Business Transformation”

On June 20, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ effort, Financial Management Business Transformation (FMBT) program, to replace its aging finance and accounting systems with the CGI Momentum system and resolve longstanding audit findings.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Teresa Riffel, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Management Business Transformation, Financial Management Business Transformation Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Charles Tapp II, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Daniel McCune, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Software Product Management, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Sidney Getz, Senior Vice President, CGI Federal; and Mr. Nick Dahl, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Examining VA.gov”

On September 26, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine recent glitches in VA.gov that impacted nearly 100,000 veterans and survivors, causing their benefits claims to be delayed or lost. The hearing aimed to cover when VA first became aware of the benefits-related glitches, whether the Department determined and disclosed the extent of the problems, how the affected veterans would be made whole, and what VA’s plan was to improve the website and associated systems.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Charles Worthington, Chief Technology Officer, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Ray Tellez, Acting Assistant

Deputy Under Secretary for Automated Benefits Delivery, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Electronic Health Record Modernization Deep Dive: System Uptime”

On November 15, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Oracle Cerner electronic health record (EHR) system. The Subcommittee demonstrated that Oracle and VA had made some improvements, independent data and the employees themselves portray the situation as dramatically worse. The Oracle Cerner EHR’s instability has been caused by a wide range of problems that Oracle, VA, and the Department of Defense (DoD) are each responsible for. The data indicates that the Oracle system itself is the primary cause. The Subcommittee questioned if Oracle and VA were not cooperating adequately, and to see if the DoD was still not sufficiently prioritizing solving the problems that its aging IT infrastructure created, despite this issue having been escalated to the VA and DoD chief information officers’ level earlier this year.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Laura Prietula, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Electronic Health Record Modernization Integration Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Bill Tinston, Director, Federal Electronic Health Record Modernization Office, U.S. Department of Defense; and Mr. Lance Scott, Solutions Integration Director and Acting Technical Director, Federal Electronic Health Record Modernization Office, U.S. Department of Defense.

The following groups submitted statements for the record: Oracle

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Reexamining VA.gov”

On December 4, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to follow up on the promises that the VA officials made in the September 26th hearing, “Examining VA.gov” to make over 120,000 veterans and survivors whole, whose benefits claims were delayed or lost because of global glitches in VA.gov. The Subcommittee also sought to explore why the pension mistakes happened, whether they were truly resolved, how the veterans would be held harmless, and whether there were connections between any of these issues.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Charles Worthington, Chief Technology Officer, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Ray Tellez, Executive Director, Office of Business Integration, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Paul Shute, Deputy Under Secretary for Automated Benefits Delivery, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“The Future of Data Privacy and Artificial Intelligence at VA”

On January 29, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine how the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) manages veterans’ data and protects their privacy. This includes detecting and containing data breaches caused by employees losing or stealing records. Such data breaches have been happening several times per year with each incident impacting hundreds or a few thousand veterans. Protecting data privacy also includes preventing the mishandling of veterans’ data by VA’s contractors or technology partners who are entrusted with access to VA’s data sets or systems, potentially impacting thousands or millions of people.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Charles Worthington, Chief Technology Officer, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Gil Alterovitz, Ph.D., Director, VA National Artificial Intelligence Institute, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. John Oswalt, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Office of Freedom of Information Act, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Stephania Grifin, Director, Information Access and Privacy Office, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Shane Tews, Nonresident Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Electronic Health Record Modernization Deep Dive: Can the Oracle Pharmacy Software Be Made Safe and Effective?”

On February 15, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine continued problems with the pharmacy functions of the Oracle Cerner electronic health record (EHR) system, including Oracle’s second unsuccessful attempt to implement a major fix in a software update, and a forthcoming Office of Inspector General (OIG) report that uncovered errors in roughly 250,000 veterans’ medication records, potentially impacting the accuracy drug-to-drug interaction and medication allergy checks. The Subcommittee will also examine the pharmacy challenges presented by the Oracle Cerner EHR go-live at the James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, which is scheduled to happen on March 9th.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Neil Evans, M.D., Acting Program Executive Director, EHRM Integration Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Thomas Emmendorfer, Pharm.D., Executive Director, Pharmacy Benefits Management Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Silverman, Pharm.D., Chairman, EHRM Pharmacy Council, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. David Case, Deputy Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Mike Sicilia, Executive Vice President, Oracle Corporation.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Supply Chain Modernization: Ready for Prime Time?”

On April 9, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine Supply Chain Modernization project when VA ignored an ultimatum in March 2024 to provide the information. The Subcommittee examined the Department of Veterans Affairs plan to award a series of contracts, potentially worth hundreds of millions or billions of dollars, for a new supply chain management IT system.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Michael D. Parrish, Chief Acquisition Officer and Principal Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Ronald Miller, Ph.D., Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Support, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Dewaine Beard, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Information and Technology Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2025”

On May 14, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Office of Information and Technology budget request for FY 2025. The Biden administration requested \$7.595 billion for OIT for fiscal year (FY) 2025, which is a slight cut from \$7.644 billion in FY 2024 (including the base budget and the Toxic Exposures Fund). The flat budget included a 99% cut to IT development, a 2.7% cut to operations and maintenance, and a 4.9% increase to salaries and administration.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Dewaine Beard, Principal Deputy Under Secretary, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nathan Tierney, Deputy Chief Information Officer and Chief People Officer, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Timothy Puetz, Deputy Chief Information Officer and Chief Financial Officer, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“The VA Beneficiary Travel Self-Service System: Mission Accomplished?”

On June 11, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Beneficiary Travel Self-Service System (BTSSS), a web-based system for veterans to input their travel reimbursement claims, replacing the medical center VetLink kiosks and the beneficiary travel module within VistA. The Subcommittee aimed to question how the BTSSS project has been managed, why VA ignored veterans’ complaints all over the country, and what is necessary for the system to achieve its goals.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Ryan Heiman, Deputy Executive Director for

Member Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Benjamin Williams, Veterans Transportation Program Director, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Carrie Lee, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Jon Retzer, Assistant National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Report Card: Assessing Electronic Health Record Modernization at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center”

On July 22, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Oracle implementation of the Oracle Cerner electronic health record (EHR) system at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in North Chicago, Illinois. The hearing aimed to assess the new problems the facility is experiencing, in addition to the challenges regarding additional staff needed and the billions of dollars of cost to compensate for the system’s productivity defects and safety risks.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Neil Evans, M.D., Acting Program Executive Director, Electronic Health Record Modernization Integration Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Buckley, M.D., Director, Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Seema Verma, Executive Vice President, Oracle Health and Oracle Life Sciences, Oracle Corporation.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA’s Open Cash Register: Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Revenue Operations”

On September 19, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Program Integrity Tool (PIT), which is a key system used to collect payments from insurance companies and veterans for non-service connected community care as well as to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse when VA pays community care providers’ claims.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Cherri Waters, Executive Director, Health Portfolio, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Tracy Davis-Bradley, Ph.D., Chief Integrity and Compliance Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Jennifer McDonald, Ph.D., Director, Community Care Division, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Ensuring Timely Access: Challenges in VA Scheduling”

On September 26, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) information technology systems used to schedule veterans’ medical appointments. The Subcommittee will also examine the viability of these projects and VA’s overall strategy to modernize appointment scheduling and encourage the Department to move forward, not waste more time and money by repeatedly changing direction.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Hillary Peabody, Acting Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Integrated Veteran Care, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Mark Hausman, M.D., Executive Director for Integrated Access, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Cherri Waters, Executive Director, Health Portfolio, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Cybersecurity: Protecting Veteran Data from Evolving Threats”

On November 20, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the results of the Office of Inspector General’s annual Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) audit and a special cybersecurity assessment by the MITRE Corporation that Congress commissioned in the Strengthening VA Cybersecurity Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–302).

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Lynette Sherrill, Chief Information Security Officer, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Jeff Spaeth, Executive Director of Information Security Operations, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Michael Bowman, Director, Information Security Division, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. David Powner, Executive Director, Center for Data-Driven Policy, MITRE Corporation.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Modernizing VA: Lessons Learned in the 118th Congress”

On December 12, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) technology modernization projects during the 118th Congress.

The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Ms. Carol Harris, Director, Information Technology and Cybersecurity Issues, U.S. Government Accountability Office; Ms. Lynn Overmann, Executive Director, Beeck Center at Georgetown University; and Mr. Reynold Schweickhardt, Non-Resident Senior Fellow for Congressional Modernization.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Orifici, Director, Benefits and Memorial Systems Portfolio, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Cherri Waters, Executive Director, Health Portfolio, Office of Information & Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

ROUNDTABLES

On October 23, 2023, the Subcommittee conducted a roundtable to discuss the trajectory of the electronic health record (EHR) industry. Specifically, the Subcommittee discussed the original policy objectives and expectations with respect to EHRs during the Bush and Obama administrations, how well the industry has performed against these expectations, and current issues facing the industry.

In attendance were: Mr. Michael Cannon, Director, Health Policy Studies, Cato Institute; Ms. Christina Caraballo, Vice President, Informatics, Health Information Management and Systems Society (HIMSS); Ms. Patricia MacTaggart, Teaching Instructor and Program Director of Health Informatics, George Washington University, Health Information Management and Systems Society (HIMSS); Mr. Brian Miller, M.D., Nonresident Fellow, American Enterprise Institute; Ms. Nora Wells, Analyst in Health Policy, Analyst in Health Policy, Congressional Research Service.

SITE VISITS

North Chicago, Illinois. On June 13–14, 2023, the Subcommittee majority and minority staff visited the James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) to examine the impact of the Oracle Cerner EHR, which went live on March 9, 2024. This was DoD's last Oracle Cerner deployment and VA's sixth. This oversight visit allowed committee staff to speak directly with facility staff and hear their firsthand perspective about the Oracle Cerner EHR. Staff concluded that the facility is performing better on Oracle Cerner than the previous VA medical centers, but this is because of an infusion of resources and strong management, not improvements in the Cerner EHR.

Pittsburgh, PA. On September 12, 2023, Subcommittee staff from the Technology Modernization and Disability and Memorial Affairs Subcommittees visited the Pittsburgh VA Regional Office to examine the office's operations and review the progress of disability compensation claims automation. The office has experienced a large staff expansion in the last year and seems to be well managed and high performing. Staff expressed frustration with the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS), but they were much more positive about automation than the Boise RO staff in October 2022. The automation tools have become more accurate and useful.

North Chicago, Illinois. On December 8, 2023, the Subcommittee majority staff visited the James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) to examine preparations for the Oracle Cerner EHR go-live on March 9, 2024. FHCC is the only DoD–VA joint hospital. Discussions with facility staff revealed that Lovell is already struggling with staffing shortages in primary care, cardiology, radiology,

and a few other specialties. Immediately after the EHR go-live, the facility plans to go down to 50% of normal patient volumes to accommodate for the transition to the new EHR. Staff concluded from the visit that FHCC is somewhat better prepared for Oracle Cerner than previous VA medical centers, but it poses a host of unique challenges that outweigh that preparedness.

Seattle, Washington. On October 1–3, 2024, the Subcommittee minority staff conducted a site visit to the Seattle VA Medical Center. The purpose of this trip was to conduct oversight of the Seattle VAMC's preparation to transition to the Electronic Health Record, and to attend the opening of Minority Veterans of America's new Transitional Housing Program.

ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN VETERANS TASK FORCE

AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN, American Samoa, *Chairwoman*
JULIA BROWNLEY, California, *Co-Chairwoman*

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ON THE TASK FORCE

MIKE BOST, Illinois	MARK TAKANO, California
JACK BERGMAN, Michigan	MIKE LEVIN, California
NANCY MACE, South Carolina	CHRIS PAPPAS, New Hampshire
MATT ROSENDALE, Montana	SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Florida
MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS, Iowa	CHRIS DELUZIO, Pennsylvania
GREG MURPHY, North Carolina	MORGAN McGARVEY, Kentucky
SCOTT FRANKLIN, Florida	DELIA RAMIREZ, Illinois
DERRICK VAN ORDEN, Wisconsin	GREG LANDSMAN, Ohio
MORGAN LUTTRELL, Texas	NIKKI BUDZINSKI, Illinois
JUAN CISCOMANI, Arizona	
ELI CRANE, Arizona	
KEITH SELF, Texas	
JEN KIGGANS, Virginia	

OLIVIA NAUGHTON, *Majority Professional Staff Member*
ALEXIS MACDONALD, *Minority Staff Director*

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

The Women Veterans Task Force coordinated all legislative activities through the subcommittees of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Task Force Roundtable—"Barriers to Disability Benefits for Women Veterans"

On April 27, 2023, the Task Force held a closed-door roundtable to address barriers to benefits for women veterans. The purpose of the roundtable is to examine the potential barriers to benefits that women veterans may face in the VA disability claims process. Such topics included: outreach to women veterans about the disability benefits available to them, potential inequities in the claims and rating process for women veterans, and ensuring accurate decisions for women veterans, including those serving in special operations.

The following were in attendance: Ms. Kristina N. Messenger, Deputy Executive Director of Operations, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration; Ms. Cheryl Rawls, Executive Director, Outreach, Transition, and Economic Development, Veterans Benefits Administration; Ms. Elizabeth Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security, Government Accountability Office; Ms. Naomi Mathis, Associate National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Ms. Kaitlynn Yancy, Associate Director, Government Affairs, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America; Ms. Alia Schenck, Casework Director, OEF Veteran, The Independence Fund; Ms. Kristina Keenan, Deputy Director of National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.; Ms. Kristen Laha-Walsh, Government Affairs Specialist, Wounded Warrior Project; Ms. Jax Scott, Board Member, Special Operation Association of America; Ms. Tiffany Myrick-Woodley, Army First Sergeant (Retired); Ms. Caitlin "Cat" Clason, MSN, CRNP, WHNP-BC; and Ms. Raquel Patrick, Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 (Retired).

Task Force Roundtable—"Women Wounded Warriors"

On May 23, 2023, the Task Force held a closed-door roundtable to examine cancer-related health issues that are specific to women veterans. Topics included the different types of cancer research (i.e. breast, ovarian, and cervical), treatments, and diagnostics being done at VA and through community care to help early detection and improve the lives of female veterans.

The following were in attendance: Ms. Sarah Colonna, MD, MSCI, Associate Professor, Medical Oncology, Breast Genetics, Huntsman Cancer, Institute/Section Chief, Hematology/Oncology, George E. Wahlen VA and Medical Director, Breast Oncology; Ms. Susan Kirsch, MD, MPH, Deputy Assistant Under Secretary, Health for Office of Discovery Education, and Affiliate Networks; Ms. Rachel Ramoni, DMD, ScD, Chief Research and Development Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Kenute Myrie, PhD, Senior Portfolio Manager for Precision Oncology; Ms. Julie Howell, Associate Legislative Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Ms. Naomi Mathis, Associate National Legislative Direc-

tor, Disabled American Veterans; Ms. Tiffany Ellett, Director, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division, The American Legion; Ms. Cassandra “Cassie” Ricci, Senior Manager, Alliance Development and Federal Government Affairs, Roche; Mr. Stan Lipkowitz, MD, PhD, Senior Investigator—Women’s Malignancies Branch, National Institute of Health; Mr. Orrin Marcella, Head of U.S. Government Affairs & Policy, GE—HealthCare; Ms. Kathryn Schubert, MPP, CAE, Chief Executive Officer, Society for Women’s Health Research; Ms. Clara Bodelon, PhD, MS, Staff Scientist—Integrative Tumor Epidemiology Branch, American Cancer Society; and Ms. Anna Jo Smith, MD, MPH, Senior Manager, Governance and Clinical Practice, Society of Gynecologic Oncology.

Task Force Roundtable—“EO focus on Underemployment for Women Veterans”

On June 7, 2023, the Task Force held a closed-door roundtable to examine issues related to underemployment as it applies to women veterans. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss the economic issues that uniquely affect women veterans. Such topics included: increasing employment opportunities for women veterans, food insecurity, and homelessness as they relate to underemployment and mental health for women veterans.

The following were in attendance: Mr. Anthony Love, Principal Advisor, Intra/Inter-Agency Collaboration and Director of Community Engagement, VHA Homeless Programs; Ms. Lourdes Tiglaio, Director, Center for Women Veterans; Ms. Regina Yount, Assistant Director, Outreach, Transition, and Economic Development; Ms. Cheyenna Irwin, Deputy Director, Veteran Readiness and Employment Service; Dr. Christine Going, Acting Senior Advisor, Food Security Office; Ms. Karla Langham, Chief of Staff; DOL-VETS; Mr. Rick Gomez, Education and Employment Policy Associate, The American Legion; Ms. Jennifer Goodale, Director, Military Family and Survivor Policy, Military Officers Association of America; Ms. Meredith M. Smith, Government Relations Deputy Director, National Military Family Association; Ms. Meggan Thomas, MPH, Associate Director, National Legislative Services, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Lt. Col. Olivia Nunn, USA (Ret), Founder and CEO, Olivia Nunn Communications LLC. & Never Stop Serving Podcast; Ms. Sarah J. Kelly, Senior Manager, Public Policy; D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families; Ms. Deborah Bradbard, Senior Research Associate, D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families; Ms. Liza Lieberman, Vice President of Communications, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger; and Ms. Christine Kurth, Director, Legislative Affairs, T-Mobile.

Task Force Roundtable—“Facility Security for Women Veterans”

On July 13, 2023, the Task Force held a closed-door roundtable to examine issues related to safety and security in VA Medical Centers as it applies to women veterans. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss the security issues that uniquely affect women veterans. Such topics included: safety for women at VA medical centers (VAMC) and women’s health clinics; recruitment, retention, and training programs for law enforcement and health care pro-

viders; and, accurately reporting and preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment on VAMC campuses.

The following were in attendance:

Ms. Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, AHA Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer, AONL Chief Executive Officer, American Hospital Association; Tracy Fuller, President, Government Services, Allied Universal; Charles Bohnenberger, Senior Vice President, Government Services, Allied Universal; Lindsay Church, Executive Director, Minority Veterans of America; Alyssa Hundrup, Director, Health Care, U.S. Government Accountability Office; Edward J. Dubois Chief, Law Enforcement Oversight and Criminal Investigations Division Office of Security and Law Enforcement, VA; Chelsea Cosby Morgan, MD Acting Director, Comprehensive Health, Office of Women's Health, VHA; Deborah K. McCallum, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Resolution Management, Diversity, and Inclusion, VA; Katheryne E. Hoover, Special Agent, Law Enforcement Oversight and Criminal Investigations Division, Office of Security and Law Enforcement; Lelia Jackson, MBA, MS, FAC-P/PM Director, VHA Assault and Harassment Prevention Program Department of Veterans Affairs; Troy Brown, Senior Security Officer, VA.

Task Force Roundtable—"Support Services for Women Veterans"

On Thursday, August 23, 2023, at Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library in Virginia Beach, VA, the Women's Veteran Task Force held a closed-door roundtable to examine issues related to Support Services for Women Veterans. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss services for women veterans after they leave the military starting on Day 1. Such topics included TAP programs and other economic assistance and geriatric care.

The following were in attendance: Mr. Fred Kinkin, the American Legion; Kathy Owens, Former Navy Pilot, President Beach Development Group; Lois Thompson, Former Army, Lieutenant, Virginia Beach Sheriff's Department; Nanette Miller, Career Navy; Kerri Furey, Navy Veteran, ForKids Inc, Defense Information School.

Task Force Roundtable—"Women in Tech"

On Thursday, September 28, 2023, the Task Force met for a closed-door roundtable to discuss women veterans in technology careers. Specifically, the Task Force examined the barriers and resources available to women veterans to enter and advance in technology careers, whether as entrepreneurs or employees, in the private or public sector. The roundtable dialogue was designed to convene knowledgeable and interested parties in a single forum where challenges, opportunities, and potential policy changes were discussed.

The following were in attendance: Ms. Barbara Ashe, President, Montgomery County Chamber Community Foundation; Ms. Julie Hoyte, MPA, BSN, RT(R), CSM, Chief Executive Officer, Health Information Technology Solutions; Ms. Katherine Webster, Founder & CEO, VetsinTech; Ms. Sharon Grimm, Chief Executive Officer, Snowbird Agility.

APPENDIX I: LEGISLATION THAT PASSED THE HOUSE

BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE
THAT PASSED THE HOUSE

03/07/2023: H.R. 502—To amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs repays members of the Armed Forces for certain contributions made by such members towards Post-9/11 Educational Assistance, and for other purposes.

03/07/2023: H.R. 1226—Wounded Warrior Access Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for the electronic request of certain records, and for other purposes.

03/08/2023: H.R. 753—VA COST SAVINGS Enhancements Act, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and for other purposes.

04/20/2023: H.R. 815—Making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes, To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements relating to the eligibility of veterans to receive reimbursement for emergency treatment furnished through the Veterans Community Care program, and for other purposes.

05/22/2023: H.R. 366—Korean American VALOR Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to treat certain individuals who served in Vietnam as a member of the armed forces of the Republic of Korea as a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States for purposes of the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

05/24/2023: H.R. 1669—VET-TEC Authorization Act of 2023, To amend title 38, United States Code, to make permanent the high technology pilot program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

05/31/2023: H.R. 3746—Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, To provide for a responsible increase to the debt ceiling.

06/20/2023: H.R. 3672—To designate the clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Indian River, Michigan, as the “Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic”.

09/18/2023: H.R. 3981—Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the methods by which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs conducts oversight of certain educational institutions, and for other purposes.

09/20/2023: H.R. 1530—Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2023, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the requirement to publish disability benefit questionnaire forms of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

11/13/2023: H.R. 593—To rename the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Hinesville, Georgia, as the “John Gibson, Dan James, William Sapp, and Frankie Smiley VA Clinic”.

11/13/2023: H. Res. 848—Encouraging the connecting of members of the Armed Forces in the United States to support structures necessary to transition from the battlefield.

12/04/2023: H.R. 3581—COPE Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the family caregiver program of the Depart-

ment of Veterans Affairs to include services related to mental health and neurological disorders, and for other purposes.

12/05/2023: H.R. 542—Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve certain programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs for home and community based services for veterans, and for other purposes.

12/05/2023: H.R. 3848—Housing our Military Veterans Effectively Act of 2023, To make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to homelessness, and for other purposes.

04/29/2024: EXPLORE Act, To improve recreation opportunities on, and facilitate greater access to, Federal public land, and for other purposes.

04/29/2024: H.R. 3722—Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act, To require a pilot program on activities under the pre-separation transition process of members of the Armed Forces for a reduction in suicide among veterans, and for other purposes.

04/29/2024: H.R. 5194—VETT Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processes to approve programs of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

04/30/2024: H.R. 1767—To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide that educational assistance paid under Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance programs to an individual who pursued a program or course of education that was suspended or terminated for certain reasons shall not be charged against the entitlement of the individual, and for other purposes.

04/30/2024: H.R. 3738—Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes.

04/30/2024: H.R. 4016—Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the repayment by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of benefits misused by a fiduciary.

07/22/2024: H.R. 4136—U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic Act, To name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Plano, Texas, as the “U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic”.

07/22/2024: H.R. 7333—To name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in West Palm Beach, Florida, as the “Thomas H. Corey VA Medical Center”.

09/17/2024: H.R. 2911—Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024, To amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to periodically review the automatic maximum coverage under the Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance program and the Veterans’ Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes.

09/17/2024: H.R. 4190—Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to repay the estates of deceased beneficiaries for certain benefits paid by the Secretary and misused by fiduciaries of such beneficiaries.

09/17/2024: H.R. 4424—Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to study and report on the prevalence of cholangiocarcinoma in veterans who served in the Vietnam theater of operations during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

09/17/2024: H.R. 5464—To name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, as the “Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic”.

09/17/2024: H.R. 6324—Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act, To authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2024, and for other purposes.

09/17/2024: H.R. 7100—Prioritizing Veterans’ Survivors Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the organization of the Office of Survivors Assistance of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

09/17/2024: H.R. 7342—Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2024, To establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes.

09/17/2024: H.R. 7777—Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024, To increase, effective as of December 1, 2024, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

09/17/2024: H.R. 7816—Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center for an assessment of notice letters that the Secretary sends to claimants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

09/25/2024: H.R. 522—Deliver for Veterans Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide or assist in providing a vehicle adapted for operation by disabled individuals to certain eligible persons, to pay expenses associated with the delivery of such vehicle, and for other purposes.

09/25/2024: H.R. 6656—Stuck on Hold Act, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Commissioner of Social Security to implement automated systems with callback functionality for each customer service telephone line of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Social Security Administration, respectively, and for other purposes.

09/25/2024: H.R. 7323—Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserves Tuition Fairness Act of 2024, Amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disapprove courses of education offered by a public institution of higher learning that does not charge the in-State tuition rate to a veteran using certain educational assistance under title 10 of such Code, and for other purposes.

11/18/2024: H.R. 7653—VERY Act of 2024, To amend title 38, United States Code, to update certain terminology regarding veteran employment.

11/18/2024: H.R. 8371—Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, To make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

APPENDIX II: PUBLIC LAWS ENACTED

Public Law 118–20: H.R. 366—Korean American Valor Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to treat certain individuals who served in Vietnam as a member of the armed forces of the Republic of Korea as a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States for purposes of the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Public Law 118–61: H.R. 593—To rename the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Hinesville, Georgia, as the “John Gibson, Dan James, William Sapp, and Frankie Smiley VA Clinic”.

Public Law 118–50: H.R. 815—Making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes, To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements relating to the eligibility of veterans to receive reimbursement for emergency treatment furnished through the Veterans Community Care program, and for other purposes.

Public Law 118–21: H.R. 1226—Wounded Warrior Access Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for the electronic request of certain records, and for other purposes.

Public Law 118–12: H.R. 3672—To designate the clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Indian River, Michigan, as the “Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic”.

Public Law 118–5: H.R. 3746—Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, To provide for a responsible increase to the debt ceiling.

Public Law 118–114: H.R. 4190—Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act, To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to repay the estates of deceased beneficiaries for certain benefits paid by the Secretary and misused by fiduciaries of such beneficiaries.

Public Law 118–114: H.R. 5464—To name the Department of Veterans Affairs community based outpatient clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, as the “Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic”.

Public Law 118–124: H.R. 6324—Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act, To authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2024, and for other purposes.

Public Law 118–128: H.R. 7333—To name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in West Palm Beach, Florida, as the “Thomas H. Corey VA Medical Center”.

Public Law 118–130: H.R. 7777—Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024, To increase, effective as of December 1, 2024, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

APPENDIX III: HEARINGS HELD PURSUANT TO
CLAUSES 2(n),(o), or (p) of RULE XI

Rule 2(n) Each standing committee, or subcommittee thereof, shall hold at least one hearing during each 120-day period following the establishment of the Committee on the topic of waste, fraud, abuse or mismanagement in Government programs which that Committee may authorize. The hearing shall focus on the most egregious instances of waste, fraud, abuse or mismanagement as documented by any report the Committee has received from a Federal Office of the Inspector General or the Comptroller General of the United States.

Full Committee Hearing—“Building an Accountable VA: Applying Lessons Learned to Drive Future Success”

On February 28, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the consequences of disengaged leadership, the implementation and state of major U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs, and how Congressional oversight would hold VA accountable to improve care and benefits for veterans.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Michael Missal, Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the Honorable Gene Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States, Government Accountability Office; the Honorable Shereef Elnahal, M.D., Under Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Michael Frueh, Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and the Honorable Matthew Quinn, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Joint Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VHA Recruitment and Retention: Is Bureaucracy Holding Back a Quality Workforce?”

On May 17, 2023, the Subcommittees on Oversight and Investigations and Health met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) and Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA’s) workforce. The subcommittees looked at VA’s recruitment, retention, and relocation efforts over the past year, with particular emphasis on legislative authorities that were enacted in the 117th Congress. The hearing also provided the subcommittees an opportunity to examine VHA’s organizational “modernization” of its Human Resource functions and its impact on the ability to adequately support Medical Center needs. Another goal of the hearing was to look at the effectiveness of VHA in retaining its workforce, to include equitable implementation of educational incentives and other benefits unique to federal employment.

There were two witness panels. The following witnesses testified on the first panel: Ms. Tracey Therit, Chief Human Capital Officer, Human Resources Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jessica

Bonjorni, MBA, PMP, SPHR, Chief of Human Capital Management, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Sharon Silas, Director of Health Care Team, Government Accountability Office.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Mary Jane “MJ” Burke, First Executive Vice President, AFGE National VA Council; Dr. Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, NEA BC, FAAN, Senior Vice President of Workforce, American Hospital Association; Mr. Will Morse, Corporate Vice President of Solution Design and Sales, AMN Healthcare; and Ms. Kelley Saindon, DNP, RN NE-BC, CHPN, Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs.

Full Committee Hearing—“COVID-19 Supplemental Funding: Did it Protect and Improve Veteran Care?”

On May 23, 2023, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine how the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs spent the roughly \$36.6 billion in combined supplemental appropriations they received in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. The Committee questioned whether VA used the funding effectively to protect and improve veteran care.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert McDivitt, Network Director, VISN 23, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the Honorable Michael Missal, Inspector General, Office of Inspect General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Whitney Bell, President, National Association of State Veterans Homes.

Subcommittee on Disability and Memorial Affairs Oversight Hearing—“VA Disability Exams: Are Veterans Receiving Quality Services?”

On July 27, 2023, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to review the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) oversight of disability exams conducted by contractors as well as Veterans Health Administration medical examiners. Other hearing topics included: exam scheduling, information technology systems for exams, examiner training, addressing underperforming examiners, and the sufficiency of VA’s process to determine the quality, timeliness, and veteran satisfaction of disability exams. The Subcommittee also examined the VA’s progress implementing the recommendations from several U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Jeffrey London, Executive Director, Medical Disability Examination Office, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jacqueline Imboden, Assistant Director, Procedures & Interagency/MilPay, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Christopher Parker, Associate Executive Director, Office of Acquisitions, Logistics and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Af-

fairs; Dr. Henry Bridges, Senior Medical Officer for the Office of Disability and Medical Assessment, (VHA/11CS DMA), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Elizabeth Curda, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and Mr. Stephen Bracci, Director, Claims and Medical Exams Inspection Division, Office of Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Background Checks: Are VA’s HR Failures Risking Drug Abuse and Veteran Harm?”

On December 6, 2023, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine VA’s personnel suitability program governance with a particular focus on how VA ensures employees with felony drug convictions are properly identified.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Jessica Bonjoni, Chief, Human Capital Management, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Shawn Steele, Director of the Healthcare Infrastructure Division, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Seto Bagdoyan, Director for Audit Services, Forensic Audits & Investigative Service, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and Mr. Daniel Galik, Executive Director for Identity Credential and Access Management, Office of Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Revolving Funds: Are Veterans Being Shortchanged?”

On January 17, 2024, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine VA’s two large revolving funds, the Franchise Fund and the Supply Fund, that provide services to VA offices and other agencies on a fee-for-service basis. Together, they have assets exceeding \$1.7 billion. The Subcommittee discovered that the Supply Fund operated at a loss in fiscal year 2023 and individual enterprises within the Franchise Fund routinely operate at a loss. The Subcommittee sought to question whether the Financial Services Center was best equipped to process payments for veterans’ community care, most of which were transferred to the VA Office of Integrated Veteran Care when the Biden administration reorganized community care in 2021.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Teresa Riffel, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Management Business Transformation, Financial Management Business Transformation Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Leroy Larkins, Executive Director, Office of Revolving Funds, Office of Management, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Phillip Christy, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Julie Matta, Deputy General Counsel, U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Full Committee Hearing—“VA’s HR Office: Did Leaders Ignore and Perpetuate Sexual Harassment?”

On February 14, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine sexual harassment and misconduct allegations within the Office of Resolution Management, Diversity & Inclusion (ORMDI), an office under the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness (HRA/OSP). Chairman Bost wrote to the VA making the Secretary aware of these allegations. The Committee’s investigation focused on the information VA was compelled to produce under the January 12th subpoena, and during the hearing, the Committee examined when VA leaders first became aware of these allegations and what they did about them.

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: the Honorable Denis McDonough, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Ms. Cassandra Law, Assistant Secretary, Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Bruce Gipe, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses were invited to the second panel but did not show up to testify: Mr. Archie Davis, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Gary Richardson, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Gina Grosso; and Mr. Harvey Johnson.

Full Committee Hearing—“Bonus Blunder: Examining VA’s Improper Decision to Award Senior Executives Millions in Incentives”

On June 4, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) report detailing its investigation into critical skill incentive (CSI) bonuses made to nearly ever career senior executive service (SES) employee in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA).

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: The Honorable Michael J. Missal, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witness testified on the second panel: The Honorable Denis R. McDonough, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Full Committee Hearing—“Accountable or Absent? Examining VA Leadership Under the Biden-Harris Administration”

On September 10, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine where accountability is lacking within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which was found though oversight travel, investigations, and whistleblower discussions. Members had the opportunity to pose questions to VA Inspector General, the Under Secretary for Health, and the Under Secretary for Benefits to examine how VA leaders would take ac-

countability for their own conduct and address substantiated and alleged misconduct.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: The Honorable Dr. Shereef Elnahal, Under Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; The Honorable Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Edward J. Murray, Acting Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and The Honorable Michael J. Missal, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Mission Transition: Evaluating Mental Health Support Programs for Separating Servicemembers”

On September 10, 2024, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to focus on the effectiveness of current mental health care programs during the transition from military to civilian life. Additionally, the Subcommittee assessed data capabilities and explored strategies for VA, DOL, and DOD to better identify and connect with veterans in need of mental health resources.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Melissa Cohen, Executive Director, Outreach Transition, and Economic Development, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jill Debord, Executive Director, Care Management and Social Work, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Susan Orsega, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Services Policy and Oversight, U.S. Department of Defense; Ms. Alyssa Hundrup, Director of Health Care, Government Accountability Office; and Mr. James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor.

Subcommittee on Technology Modernization Oversight Hearing—“VA’s Open Cash Register: Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Revenue Operations”

On September 19, 2024, the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Program Integrity Tool (PIT), which is a key system used to collect payments from insurance companies and veterans for non-service connected community care as well as to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse when VA pays community care providers’ claims.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Kurt DelBene, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Cherri Waters, Executive Director, Health Portfolio, Office of Information and Technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Tracy Davis-Bradley, Ph.D., Chief Integrity and Compliance Officer, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Jennifer McDonald, Ph.D., Di-

rector, Community Care Division, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Accountability: What has Happened to Hampton?”

On September 24, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the alleged and substantiated misconduct within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hampton Medical Center (Hampton VA). Whistleblowers alleged the Hampton VA Chief of Surgery was a poor leader who retaliated against those who reported patient safety concerns and failed to act against medical professionals who were clinically inept. Whistleblowers also alleged Hampton VA leadership did not adequately address the whistleblowers’ concerns and poorly managed the facility. The whistleblowers alleged this ineffective leadership led to internal employee disputes, workplace harassment, and facility cleanliness issues. As a result, many providers have left the facility.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Paul S. Crews, Veterans Integrated Services Network 6 Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Frederick Kotler, MD, Interim Medical Inspector, Office of the Medical Inspector, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Walt C. Dannenberg, Acting Executive Director, VA Hampton Health Care, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Jennifer Baptiste, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Healthcare Inspections, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“Digital GI Bill in Disarray: Holding the Biden-Harris Administration Accountable for VA’s Costly Mismanagement”

On September 26, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) progress at retiring antiquated legacy IT systems and implementing the Digital G.I. Bill IT system, which aims to streamline the processing of education benefits under the G.I. Bill. The hearing focused on the report from the Office of Inspector General (OIG) highlighting issues with the planning, expectations, and execution of the Digital GI Bill (DGIB) project. The hearing also reviewed the recommendations of the Office of the Inspector General to improve the program and ideas to make the DGIB program more efficient for veterans.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Ronald Burke, Undersecretary for Policy and Oversight, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Robert Orifici, Executive Director, Benefits and Memorial Services, Office of Information and Technology, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director, Education Services, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nicholas Dahl, Deputy Assistant Inspector General, Management and Administration, Office of the Inspector General, U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Justin Parke, Managing Director, DGIB Program Manager, Accenture Federal Services.

Rule 2(p) Each standing committee, or subcommittee thereof, shall hold at least one hearing on issues raised by reports issued by the Comptroller General of the United States indicating that federal programs or operations that the Committee may authorize are at high risk for waste, fraud, and mismanagement, known as the “high risk list” or the “high risk series.”

Subcommittee on Technology Modernization Oversight Hearing:—“VA Information Technology Contracting: Challenges in Consolidation of Competition and Conflict of Interest”

On May 24, 2023, the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine trends in the U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs (VA) information technology contracting including increasing spending, a consolidating contractor/supplier base, and procurement methods that limit the pool of eligible companies. The Subcommittee also considered VA’s management of organizational conflicts of interest among current and prospective contractors.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Ms. Shelby Oakley, Director, Contracting and National Security Acquisitions, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and Ms. Hana Schank, Senior Advisor, New America.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Procurement: Made in America”

On September 20, 2023, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine how VA’s procurement practices and the reasons why more progress has not been made. The subcommittee sought to investigate why very little appeared to have been accomplished to boost domestic purchases during the Biden Administration, particularly in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, which is the second largest buyer in the federal government.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Michael D. Parrish, Principal Executive Director and Chief Acquisition Officer, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. Angela Billups, Executive Director and Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Andrew Centineo, Executive Director for Procurement and Logistics, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dr. Thomas Emmendorfer, Executive Director for Pharmacy Benefits Management Services, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subcommittee Oversight Hearing—“VA Supply Chain Modernization: Ready for Prime Time?”

On April 9, 2024, the Subcommittee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine Supply Chain Modernization

project when VA ignored an ultimatum in March 2024 to provide the information. The Subcommittee examined the Department of Veterans Affairs plan to award a series of contracts, potentially worth hundreds of millions or billions of dollars, for a new supply chain management IT system.

There was one witness panel. The following witnesses testified: Mr. Michael D. Parrish, Chief Acquisition Officer and Principal Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Ronald Miller, Ph.D., Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Support, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Dewaine Beard, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Rule 2(o) Each standing committee, or subcommittee thereof, shall hold at least one hearing in any session in which the Committee has received disclaimers of agency financial statements from auditors of any federal agency that the Committee may authorize to hear testimony on such disclaimers from representatives of such agency.

Full Committee Hearing—“U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026”

On April 11, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to consider President Biden’s budget request for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal years 2025 and 2026. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs requested \$369.3 billion for fiscal year 2025, which is a \$41.8 billion increase over FY 2024 in mandatory spending and a \$8.9 billion decrease over FY 2024 in discretionary spending.

There were two witness panels. The following witness testified on the first panel: The Honorable Denis McDonough, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The following witnesses testified on the second panel: Mr. Roscoe Butler, Senior Health Policy Advisor, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; and Mr. Patrick Murray, National Legislative Service Director, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Full Committee Hearing—“Fact and Fiction: Getting to the Bottom of the VA Budget Shortfall”

On December 5, 2024, the Full Committee met in open session to conduct an oversight hearing to examine the circumstances surrounding the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) purported fiscal year (FY) 2024 benefits budget shortfall and FY 2025 health care budget shortfall.

There was one witness panel for this hearing. The following witnesses testified: the Honorable Shereef Elnahal, M.D., Under Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the Honorable Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Edward Murray, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management and Deputy Chief Financial Officer; Ms. Laura Duke, Chief Financial Officer for Veterans Health Administration, U.S. Depart-

ment of Veterans Affairs; and Ms. Lasheeco Graham, Chief Financial Officer, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

APPENDIX IV: MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER EXECUTIVE BRANCH COMMUNICATIONS

Executive Communication 164—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
01/25/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's interim final rule—Reimbursement of Emergent Suicide Care (RIN: 2900–AR50) received January 19, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 165—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
01/25/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Modifications of Approval Requirements for Courses Designed to Prepare Individuals for Licensure or Certifications (RIN: 2900–AQ91) received January 19, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 344—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
02/02/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Statutory Increase in Operations and Maintenance Grant Funding (RIN: 2900–AR71) received January 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 415—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
02/14/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—VA Acquisition Regulation: Acquisition of Information Technology; and Other Contracts for Goods and Services Involving Information, VA Sensitive Information, and Information Security; and Liquidated Damages Requirements for Data Breach (RIN: 2900–AQ41) received February 2, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 526—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
03/01/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Change in Rates VA Pays for Special Modes of Transportation (RIN: 2900–AP89) received February 21, 2023, pur-

suant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communication 548—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—
03/03/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule—Reimbursement for Emergency Treatment (RIN: 2900–AQ08) received February 28, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communication 750—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—
04/13/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule Updating Presumptive Radiation Locations based on the PACT Act (RIN: 2900–AR74) received March 16, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communication 751—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—
04/13/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program (RIN: 2900–AQ53) received March 16, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communication 880—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—
05/05/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s interim final rule—Exceptions to Applying the Bilateral Factor in VA Disability Calculations (RIN: 2900–AR51) received May 2, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 881—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—
05/05/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Medical Benefits Package; Chiropractic Services (RIN: 2900–AQ70) received May 2, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 1048—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—05/25/2023

A letter from the National Adjutant, Chief Executive Officer, Disabled American Veterans, transmitting the reports and proceedings of the 2022 National Convention of Disabled American Veterans, held in Orlando, Florida, August 6–9, 2022, pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 1332; Public Law 90–620, Oct. 22, 1968 (as amended by Public Law 105–225, section 3); (112 Stat. 1498); (H. Doc. No. 118–44); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

Executive Communications 1116—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—06/06/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Collection or Recovery by VA for Humanitarian Care or Services and for Certain Other Care and Services (RIN: 2900–AQ58) received May 25, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 1454—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—07/24/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Allowance for Caskets and Urns for Unclaimed Remains of Veterans (RIN: 2900–AR36(F)) received July 10, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 1586—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—08/08/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Names for National Cemeteries and Features (RIN: 2900–AR81(F)) received July 24, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 1620—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—08/08/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Nomenclature Change for Position Title—Revision (RIN: 2900–AQ11(F)) received July 24, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Memorial 56—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/01/2023

The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the State of California, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 4, urging the Congress to provide funding for the ongoing operation of satellite

VHA medical clinics located on or near California veterans' home campuses; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 1830—House Foreign Affairs and 4 more committees including the Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/08/2023

A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting proposed legislation to provide mandatory appropriations and necessary authorities to carry out agreements related to the Compacts of Free Association between the Government of the United States of America and the Governments of the three Freely Associated States (FAS)—the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau (Palau); jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, Veterans' Affairs, and Education and the Workforce.

Executive Communications 1958—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/28/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Persons Eligible for Burial (RIN: 2900-AR80(F)) received September 15, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Memorial 69—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/28/2023

The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the State of Louisiana relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 12, to memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to establish the "Agent Orange Veterans Service Medal" to commemorate the service and sacrifice of veterans who were exposed to the Agency Orange herbicide during the Vietnam War from 1961 to 1971; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 1972—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/30/2023

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's Major final rule—Presumptive Service Connection for Respiratory Conditions Due to Exposure to Fine Particulate Matter [RIN: 2900-AR25] received September 11, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Memorial 79—House Armed Services and House Committee on Veterans' Affairs—10/03/2023

The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 5, urging the United States Congress, Department of Defense, and Department of Veterans Affairs to prioritize research and investment in non-technology treatment options for

servicemembers and veterans who have psychological trauma as a result of military service; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 2484—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
12/05/2023

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—VA Pilot Program on Graduate Medical Education and Residency (RIN: 2900–AR01) received November 29, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 2576—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
12/15/2023

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulations Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Payments Under State Home Care Agreements for Nursing Home Care (RIN: 2900–AR62) received December 5, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 2584—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
12/19/2023

A letter from the Adjutant General, Veterans Of Foreign Wars, transmitting the proceedings of the 123rd National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, held in Kansas City, Missouri, July 16–21, 2023, pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 1332; Public Law 90–620, Oct. 22, 1968 (as amended by Public Law 105–225, section 3); (112 Stat. 1498); (H. Doc. No. 118–91); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

Executive Communication 2794—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
12/29/2023

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, OGC, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's Major final rule—Reevaluation of Claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (RIN: 2900–AR76) received December 5, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communication 3087—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—
02/07/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—85/15 Rule Calculations, Waiver Criteria, and Reports [RIN: 2900–AR56] received January 22, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Petition 10—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—02/14/2024

The Speaker presented a petition of the Legislature of Guam, relative to Resolution No. 29–37, requesting for the U.S. Congress to appropriate monies for Guam non-military residents who were exposed to Agent Orange and who are suffering from ailments caused by exposure to Agent Orange; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 3378—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—03/11/2024

A letter from the Legislative Director, Legislative Division, American Legion, transmitting The American Legion's 102nd Annual Report, The American Legion's Proceedings Of The 102nd Annual National Convention, And The American Legion's Proceedings Of The 103rd Annual National Convention; (H. Doc. No. 118–115); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

Executive Communications 3379—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—03/11/2024

A letter from the Legislative Director, Legislative Division, American Legion, transmitting The American Legion's 103rd Annual Report, The American Legion's Proceedings Of The 103rd Annual National Convention, And The American Legion's Proceedings Of The 104th Annual National Convention; (H. Doc. No. 118–116); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

Executive Communications 3649—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—04/02/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veteran Affairs, transmitting the Department's Major final rule—Schedule for Rating Disabilities: The Digestive System (RIN: 2900–AQ90) received March 27, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 3650—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—04/02/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulatory Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Reproductive Health Services (RIN: 2900–AR57) received March 27, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 3651—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—04/02/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Agency Ethics Officials (RIN: 2900–AS04) received March 27, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 3714—House Education and the Workforce and 7 more committees including the Committee on Veterans' Affairs—04/05/2024

A letter from the Senior Counsel, Office of Legal Policy, DOJ (on behalf all participating Agencies), Department of Justice et. al., transmitting the Departments' final rule—Partnerships With Faith-Based and Neighborhood Organizations [A.G. Order No.: 5874 2024] (RIN: 2900-AR23; 0412-AB10; 0503-AA73; 0991-AC13; 1105-AB64; 1290-AA45; 1601-AB02; 1840-AD46; 2501-AD91) received March 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, Homeland Security, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Financial Services, the Judiciary, Veterans' Affairs, and Energy and Commerce.

Executive Communications 3822—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—04/17/2024

A letter from the National Adjutant, Chief Executive Officer, Disabled American Veterans, transmitting the reports and proceedings of the 2023 National Convention of Disabled American Veterans, held in Atlantic City, New Jersey, August 5-8, 2023; (H. Doc. No. 118-132); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

Executive Communications 4061—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—05/06/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Loan Guaranty: Servicic Regulation Changes (RIN: 2900-AR97) received April 24, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Memorial 101—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—05/06/2024

The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Maine, relative to Joint Resolution S.P. 998, requesting the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to provide access to medical care and assistance to members of the Maine National Guard who trained at the military support base in Gagetown, New Brunswick, Canada; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 4084—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—05/07/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulatory Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's manual—VA Manual M26-3, Chapter 9: VA Purchase received April 24, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 4085—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—05/07/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulatory Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, De-

partment of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's handbook—VA Servicer Handbook M26–4, Chapter 9: VA Purchase received April 24, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 4399—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—05/31/2024

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulations Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Changes to the Provision of Health Care for World War II Veterans (RIN: 2900–AS01) received May 21, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 4425—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—06/03/2024

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Commemorative Plaques and Urns (RIN: 2900–AR88) received May 22, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 4618—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—06/26/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Changes in Rates VA Pays for Special Modes of Transportation; Delay of Effective Date (RIN: 2900–AS03) received June 12, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 4707—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—07/05/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Office of the General Counsel (OCG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—CHAMPVA Coverage of Audio-Only Telehealth, Mental Health Services, and Cost Sharing for Certain Contraceptive Services and Contraceptive Products Approved, Cleared, or Granted by FDA (RIN: 2900–AR55) received June 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 5014—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—07/30/2024

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's Major final rule—Update and Clarify Regulatory Bars to Benefits Based

on Character of Discharge (RIN: 2900–AQ95(F)) received July 26, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5030—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—08/02/2024

A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Veteran and Spouse Transitional Assistance Grant Program (RIN: 2900–AR68) received July 26, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5102—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—08/16/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Reconsideration of Burial and Memorialization Decisions (RIN: 2900–AR37(F)) received August 2, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5318—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—09/16/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Adaptive Equipment Allowance (RIN: 2900–AP39) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5319—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—09/16/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Center for Innovation for Care and Payment Update (RIN: 2900–AR18) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5320—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—09/16/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Update to Delegations of Authority to Certain Officials (RIN: 2900–AS09) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5321—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/16/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Exemption of "Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program Records" (203VA08) (RIN: 2900-AR95) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 5322—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/16/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's handbook—VA Servicer Handbook M26-4, Chapter 9: VA Purchase received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 5323—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—09/16/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulatory Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—VA Health Professional Scholarship Program (RIN: 2900-AR98) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 5531—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—10/01/2024

A letter from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy & Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Bar to Approval (RIN: 2900-AQ99) received August 27, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 5532—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—10/01/2024

A letter from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Delegation of Concurrence for Entitlement Extensions (RIN: 2900-AS14(F)) received August 27, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 5649—House Armed Services and 1 more committee—10/11/2024

A letter from the Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense, transmitting the Annual Joint Report

for Fiscal Year 2023 regarding the activities and accomplishments of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 8111(f)(1); Public Law 96–22, section 301(a) (as amended by Public Law 97–174, section 3(a)(3)); (96 Stat. 73); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5924—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—11/01/2024

A letter from the Senior Advisor, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Expanded Burial Benefits (RIN: 2900–AR69) received October 11, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5925—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—11/01/2024

A letter from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Outer Burial Receptacles (RIN: 2900–AR82) received October 11, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5926—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—11/01/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program (RIN: 2900–AR16) received October 11, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5927—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—11/01/2024

A letter from the Regulations Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department’s manual—VA Manual M26 3, Chapter 9: VA Purchase received October 11, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 5928—Committee on Veterans’ Affairs—11/01/2024

A letter from the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a draft bill, the “Veterans Health, Benefits and Administration Programs Act of 2025”; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Executive Communications 6198—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—11/26/2024

A letter from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Fee Reasonableness Reviews; Effect of Loss of Accreditation on Direct Payment (RIN: 2900–AR93) received November 21, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 6199—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—11/26/2024

A letter from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Determining Eligibility for Domiciliary Care (RIN: 2900–AR61) received November 21, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Executive Communications 6200—Committee on Veterans' Affairs—11/26/2024

A letter from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Legal Services for Homeless Veterans and Veterans At-Risk for Homelessness Grant Program (RIN: 2900–AR33) received November 21, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104–121, section 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

