DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
INSPECTOR GENERAL
WASHINGTON DC 20420

AUG 11 2016

The Honorable Joni Ernst
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Ernst:

This is in response to your cosigned August 2, 2016 letter requesting that the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) review the health care provided to Mr. Brandon Ketchum by the Iowa City VA Medical Center in Iowa City, Iowa prior to his suicide in July 2016.

The circumstances regarding his suicide are now under review by the Office of Healthcare Inspections within the OIG. Upon completion of our review, we will make every effort to share whatever information we can in accordance with applicable law.

We also would draw your attention to VA's recently released report, "Suicide Among Veterans and Other Americans 2001-2014" containing wide-ranging research into suicide in the veteran population. We hope that our review of Mr. Ketchum's care may help augment the information in the VA's report to enable policymakers and healthcare providers to help better serve at-risk veteran populations.

We provided a similar response to the cosigners under separate cover.

Thank you for your interest in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL J. MISSAL

Copy to: The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary