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June 29, 2020

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie,

Since your confirmation, I have appreciated your efforts to improve the Veterans Affairs (VA) system to ensure that our veterans receive the support and care they need to live full and healthy lives. Today, I am writing to inquire about the status of implementation of the VA MISSION Act of 2018.

As you know, June 2020 marks the two-year anniversary of the enactment of the VA MISSION Act. My colleagues and I designed this bipartisan legislation to reform the VA system to increase access to health care in VA facilities and in the community, reduce wait times, expand benefits for caregivers, and improve the VA's ability to recruit and retain quality medical professionals. At this two-year mark, it is vital to ensure that this landmark legislation is being properly implemented, and that veterans are able to utilize and benefit from provisions under the bill.

For example, I led the bipartisan Veterans E-Health & Telemedicine Support (VETS) Act, which was included in the VA MISSION Act to improved access to care for disabled and rural veterans by expanding telehealth services. This is just one of many important provisions included in the VA MISSION Act to ensure that those who have sacrificed for our freedom have access to the quality and timely care they deserve.

In light of the two-year anniversary of enactment, I respectfully request that you provide my office with a comprehensive briefing on the status of fully implementing the VA MISSION Act, as well as how programs are being utilized, and how both access and quality of care have improved for our veterans over these past two years.

Once again, I thank you for your ongoing work on behalf of our veterans. I remain deeply committed to ensuring that all of our nation's heroes, in Iowa and across the country, have access to quality care and services. I look forward to your response and to scheduling a briefing.

Sincerely,



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator

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