

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

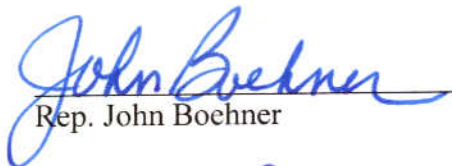
We are writing to express our profound disappointment over news reports that your Administration is considering a proposal to breach a solemn obligation to our nation's veterans who have courageously fought for our freedom. If true, the proposal under consideration would permit the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to ignore its core responsibility to provide health care services to our men and women who have a service related disability. We recognize much work needs to be done to improve access to health care services for veterans; however, turning our backs on our veterans by shifting the burden to private health care insurers for their disability-related health care is the wrong policy course.

In his second inaugural address, President Abraham Lincoln uttered the immortal words, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan." These words are engraved at the entrance of the VA in Washington D.C. They remind us of the Department's mission on behalf of a grateful nation for the men and women who have served in military uniform, particularly for those who have become disabled as a result of their service. Since colonial times, our forebearers have recognized this moral responsibility of civil government.

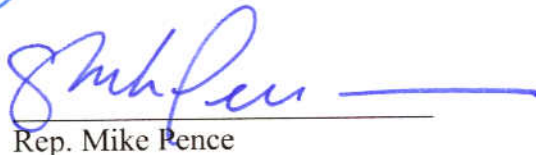
We adamantly oppose any attempt to shift this responsibility through an unfunded mandate on private insurers. We intend to protect and honor the service of our highest priority veterans by appropriating the resources necessary for their care.

We hope you will not go forward with this ill-conceived plan and will assure our service-disabled veterans that your Administration is committed to meeting its obligations to them.

Sincerely,


Rep. John Boehner


Rep. Eric Cantor


Rep. Mike Pence


Rep. Thaddeus McCotter

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Pete Sessions
Rep. Pete Sessions

David Dreier
Rep. David Dreier

Steve Buyer
Rep. Steve Buyer

Jerry Moran
Rep. Jerry Moran

Jeff Miller
Rep. Jeff Miller

Brian L. Bilbray
Rep. Brian Bilbray

Gus M. Bilirakis
Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis

David P. Roe
Rep. David P. Roe

Cynthia M. Lummis
Rep. Cynthia Lummis

John Carter
Rep. John Carter

Roy Blunt
Rep. Roy Blunt

Kevin McCarthy
Rep. Kevin McCarthy

Cliff Stearns
Rep. Cliff Stearns

Henry E. Brown, Jr.
Rep. Henry E. Brown, Jr.

John Boozman
Rep. John Boozman

Doug Lamborn
Rep. Doug Lamborn

Vern Buchanan
Rep. Vern Buchanan

Ginny Brown-Waite
Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite