



4 June 2014

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen (NH)
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen,

On behalf of the Association of the United States Navy (AUSN), we are writing to express support for your bill S. 2423, the Veterans Access to Care Accountability Act, which would improve wait times for appointments for hospital care, medical services, and other health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and improve accountability of employees responsible for long wait times for such appointments.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently reported that there have been gaps and gross mismanagement within the VA. The report included activities such as our nation's Veterans being delayed vital care. The OIG review states that 1,400 Veterans were included on the Phoenix, Arizona Healthcare System Electronic Wait List (EWL). However, another 1,700 Veterans who were waiting for a primary care appointment were not placed on the EWL. These findings are alarming and must be addressed to ensure our Veterans receive the timely care that they need.

S. 2423 would implement a new random auditing requirement by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the OIG and other watchdog agencies for VA medical facilities. The bill would also require Veterans to be contacted within 48 hours and have an appointment scheduled with an outside medical facility within one week if a report determines Veterans have been delayed access to care. Furthermore, the bill includes provisions to hold VA officials involved in potential delays accountable. The accountability provision includes banning the distribution of bonuses to VA officials who may have been involved in mismanagement.

Thank you for your initiative in introducing legislation which seeks to help our Veteran community through improved healthcare for Veterans and accountability for VA officials. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 703-548-5800.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony A. Wallis", is written over a horizontal line.

Anthony A. Wallis
Legislative Director, AUSN