



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

May 27, 2020

The Honorable Robert Wilkie  
Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs  
United States Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Room 1000 Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Wilkie,

As a bipartisan group of veterans, active service members and elected officials who serve in the Wisconsin State Legislature, we are writing to encourage the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure veterans continue to have access to crucial community care during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically, we urge you to continue allowing veterans access to community care under the VA MISSION Act that was signed into law in June 2018. This expansion of access to community care was and continues to be vital to the lives and wellbeing of veterans across the country, particularly in our state.

Wisconsin is home to approximately 330,000 veterans, many of whom utilize the community care that is allowed under the MISSION Act. These veterans are accessing critical mental health care, engaging in essential physical therapy, participating in substance abuse treatment, and receiving other needed medical care that VA facilities are unable to provide.

Health care providers in our state are innovating to provide care in their communities – and we strongly believe the VA should follow suit and not suspend community care treatment. Additionally, for any veteran that has been denied community care during this pandemic, we strongly encourage the VA to reverse those decisions and allow those individuals to access potentially life-saving community care.

The COVID-19 pandemic cannot and should not impact the health care options available to our veterans, particularly at a time when they face increased isolation.

Community care continues to be vital to the health of our heroic veterans. On behalf of the hundreds of thousands of veterans in Wisconsin, we strongly urge the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs not to restrict access to this essential health care option.

Sincerely,



Dale P. Kooyenga  
State Senator  
5<sup>th</sup> Senate District



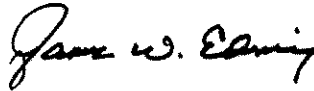
Jim Ott  
State Representative  
23<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District



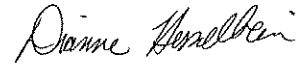
Scott Allen  
State Representative  
97<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Tim Carpenter  
State Senator  
3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District



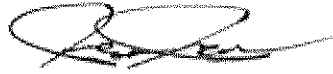
James Edming  
State Representative  
87<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Dianne Hesselbein  
State Representative  
79<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Howard Marklein  
State Senator  
17<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Jesse James  
State Representative  
68<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



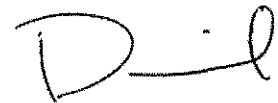
Tony Kurtz  
State Representative  
50<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



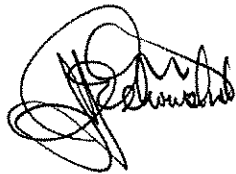
Mark Miller  
State Senator  
16<sup>th</sup> Senate District



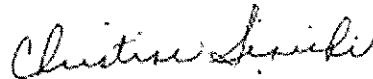
Nick Milroy  
State Representative  
73<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District




Daniel Riemer  
State Representative  
7<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



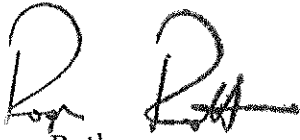
Jerry Petrowski  
State Senator  
29<sup>th</sup> Senate District



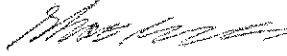
Christine Sinicki  
State Representative  
20<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Ken Skowronski  
State Representative  
82<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District



Roger Roth  
State Senator  
19<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Shae Sortwell  
State Representative  
2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District



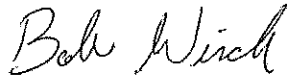
John Spiros  
State Representative  
86<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Fred Risser  
State Senator  
26<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Paul Tittl  
State Representative  
25<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Robert Wirch  
State Senator  
22<sup>nd</sup> Senate District