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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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July 11, 2014

The Honorable Corrine Brown  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2111 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Brown,

Thank you for providing Democratic Members the opportunity to advocate for our priorities before the Veteran Access to Care Act of 2014 Conference Committee. With so many urgent issues concerning the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and veterans across our nation, I conducted a series of roundtables across my district to hear the views and experiences firsthand from our nation's heroes, where I pledged to return to Washington prepared to address the concerns of the 60,000 veterans in my district. Beyond the urgent need to end the shameful disability benefits backlog at the VA, vets attending our roundtables spoke up in support of three major reforms to improve the VA health care system.

**If you're a veteran, you're entitled to health care wherever you are.** Currently, the federal government requires veterans to drive to VA hospitals for many treatments, which sometimes requires veterans in rural areas of my district to drive hours and hundreds of miles for medical attention. I have long supported allowing veterans to use local health care providers in their own hometowns, giving veterans the convenience and comfort they deserve, and providing for quicker, less stressful treatment, whether it be determined through rural population density (as in the HEALTHY Vets Act, H.R.635), or through a pre-determined distance.

**If you're a veteran, you're entitled to chiropractic care.** Many veterans in my district also told me that lack of access to a chiropractor is a major problem, reflective of a nationwide issue. The VA has been slow to provide chiropractic care at more than 100 of its major medical facilities. As a result, an overwhelming majority of America's veterans still do not have access to this type of treatment as an alternative to prescribed pain pharmaceuticals, which may cause negative side-effects. I therefore support requiring the VA to have a chiropractic physician on staff at all major VA medical facilities by 2016, if not sooner. The Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act (H.R.921) would address this issue.

**If you're a veteran with service-related mental illness, you're entitled to treatment.** I believe there is a need to substantially increase access to mental health treatment for our veterans, and support the Veterans Mental Health Accessibility Act (H.R.1725) as proposed by Rep. Matt Cartwright to allow veterans who served in combat from all military operations to seek treatment for service-connected mental illnesses, regardless of when their conditions manifest themselves.

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We must leave no stone unturned to assure that the men and women who have put themselves in harm's way to protect and serve us have the very best medical care, counseling, housing, job training, and educational opportunities a grateful nation can provide. Thank you for your consideration of these existing bills and their underlying policies as you negotiate with the U.S. Senate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard M. Nolan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Richard M. Nolan  
Member of Congress