

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 4, 2022

The Honorable Denis McDonough  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary McDonough:

We are writing to share challenges that have been brought to our attention by veterans having difficulty getting placed in a long-term care (LTC) facility that is easily accessible to their network of support. Veterans have shared with us that they are being relocated from one facility to another on relatively short notice, and that with each move their families are facing driving times exceeding two hours each direction to visit their loved ones.

As our veteran population continues to age, we understand it can get more challenging to care for them. In the past when our staff and county veteran service officers expressed their frustration with the lack of private care facilities contracting with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), they were told private facilities may be less inclined to contract with the VA to care for veterans. The reason provided for this reluctance was that veterans in LTC facilities are more likely to experience acute health care challenges that may complicate a facility's efforts to remain compliant with health care quality standards set by state licensing agencies. While we understand this factor may be a challenge, we hope to partner with the VA to find an effective solution to address the needs of Hoosier veterans.

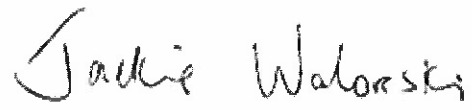
To provide an example for your reference, one veteran who contacted us had been at the same LTC facility for 30 years. His stay at that facility came to an end in 2014 due to the facility terminating their contract with the VA. Since then, the veteran has been transferred to multiple facilities and each transfer has left him further and further away from his home and family. Veterans receiving treatment at a LTC facility already experience stress and anguish not being at home or near loved ones. Being relocated farther away just adds to the stress and hardship and is not conducive to the standard of care veterans have earned.

We would appreciate answers to the following questions:

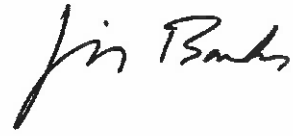
1. Is this challenge unique to Indiana or has the VA experienced issues contracting with LTC facilities for veterans in other states?
2. What is the VA's current policy on LTC facilities for veterans and their standards of care?
3. If the VA is experiencing challenges contracting with LTC facilities to provide long term care, what plans are you putting in place to address these issues?
4. Are there specific policy recommendations you could share with us that might help address this problem?

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to have your staff contact Andy Porter in Congressman Banks' office at (260) 702-4750, or Stephen Simonetti in Congresswoman Walorski's office at (202) 225-3915.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jackie Walorski in cursive script.

Jackie Walorski  
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Jim Banks in cursive script.

Jim Banks  
Member of Congress