

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 20, 2014

Secretary Eric J. Shinseki
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

We are writing to express our concern about the widespread reports of misconduct at several VA Medical Centers around the country.

These reports bring to light unjustifiable appointment wait times that have resulted in unnecessary suffering among untold numbers of veterans. These misdeeds break a sacred trust with our veterans to provide timely access to the best possible health care in return for their service and sacrifice. Furthermore, the fact that multiple VA facilities across numerous states appear to be involved in an effort to game the system raises serious concerns about a systematic attempt within the Veterans Health Administration to undermine congressional oversight of the VA's performance in meeting veterans' needs and improving VA care.

We strongly support the efforts of both Congress and the VA Inspector General to investigate this matter fully and to hold those involved accountable. We expect decisive action to fix this problem at the source and ensure that our nation's veterans are never again subjected to such gross mistreatment.

On behalf of nearly 500,000 Hoosier veterans, we ask that you immediately verify whether any Indiana facilities within the VA Health Care System took similar actions to manipulate wait times and deceive veterans, Congress, and the public. We ask that you promptly report any findings related to Indiana facilities and identify an immediate course of action to resolve any issues uncovered.

It is imperative that our nation provides the very best care to our veterans. The VA must re-earn the confidence and trust of veterans and Americans. As our nation ends the war in Afghanistan, and as hidden wounds manifest in the future, more veterans will rely on VA medical care. Prompt action and systemic changes are imperative to reestablishing this trust and saving lives.

Sincerely,


Joe Donnelly
United States Senator


Dan Coats
United States Senator