Dear Secretary Robert Wilkie,

(edits@insidesources.com) has invited you to be a panelist for the following webinar:

**Virtual Editorial Board Meeting with VA Secretary Robert Wilkie**

**Add to Calendar**

**1. Click the link to join the webinar at the specified time and date:**
Thu, Jul 16, 2020 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

**Join Webinar**

*Note: This link should not be shared with others; it is unique to you.*

Before joining, be sure to check system requirements to avoid any connection issues.

**2. Choose one of the following audio options:**

**TO USE YOUR COMPUTER'S AUDIO:**
When the webinar begins, you will be connected to audio using your computer's microphone and speakers (VoIP). A headset is recommended.

--OR--

**TO USE YOUR TELEPHONE:**
If you prefer to use your phone, you must select "Use Telephone" after joining the webinar and call in using the numbers below.
United States: +1 (562) 247-8422
Access Code: (b)(6)
Audio PIN: Shown after joining the webinar
From: Eason, William (Jordan) J.
Sent: Wed, 1 Jul 2020 19:16:38 +0000
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Hutton, James; Cashour, Curtis
Subject: Virtual Editorial Board Meeting w/ Newspapers

We’d like to set up a conference call/zoom/skype meeting with many newspapers. Do you have a date/time that would work best? The host (InsideSources) says that sometime around 2:00 p.m. would work best for them so they can gather their Midwest/western US papers for the call.

Thanks,

Jordan Eason
Director, Media Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
One Hour Press Briefing Call with Inside Sources Newspapers, Thursday, July 16 at 1:00 p.m.

Format: SecVA Opening Remarks, Q&A moderated by Michael Graham of Inside Sources

POTENTIAL QUESTIONS/TOPICS
COVID-19/ Fourth Mission PREVENTS Fisher House

Inside Sources represents hundreds of small to medium market newspapers in the United States.

CONTACT INFORMATION
OUTLET: Inside Sources
Moderator: Michael Graham
Time: 1:00 p.m.
DATE: Thursday, July 16, 2020
The Department of Veterans Affairs is unified with its federal partners in leading the medical response to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Within days of the first confirmed COVID-19 case, VA began implementing a comprehensive response and operations plan to protect our Veterans, their families and the workforce.

The VA is supporting states and veterans’ groups during COVID-19

- The Department of Veterans Affairs is assisting a total of 46 states and territories with their Coronavirus response. It has accepted mission assignments from FEMA in 28 states and territories.
- The VA is providing humanitarian aid to another 21 states and territories.
- Since March 26th, the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of the VA have participated in 33 phone discussions or meetings with Governors or their chiefs of staff.
- The Veterans Benefits Administration has hosted tele-town halls in 23 states to discuss the VA’s COVID-19 response efforts and it has reached over 867,000 Veterans nationwide.
- Secretary Wilkie and other VA leaders have participated in 11 weekly calls to keep major Veteran Service Organizations up to date on the agency’s COVID-19 response efforts.

The VA is caring for patients during COVID-19

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Department of Veterans Affairs, with outside assistance, has tested over 230,000 patients for COVID-19 and over 193,000 tests were returned negative. The agency has also hired 3,971 new Registered Nurses between March 29th and early June.
- To date, 14,292 Veterans nationwide have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Among those Veterans, 80 percent are convalescent (14 days post-positive test) and 1,447 are active patients.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs has made 11,864 VA beds available for all patients, up from 9,840 in late March. As of May, the Department of Veterans Affairs also has 1,961 ICU ventilators on hand.

Veterans’ trust in VA is at record levels

- Veterans’ trust in the VA has reached a record high during this national emergency. In the second quarter of 2020, overall Veteran trust in the entire VA system rose to 80 percent, an all-time high and up 19 percentage points from when President Trump took office. Veterans’ trust in the VA’s outpatient services stands at an all-time high of 89 percent.
- From Q1 to Q2 in 2020, trust in the VA among male Veterans rose 6 percent, and it rose 10 percent for female Veterans, a strong sign that the VA is living up to its promise to expand care for women Veterans.
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 19:51:18 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Zoom Interview w/ Government Executive Media Group
Attachments: FW: [EXTERNAL] Invitation: Government Executive Interview: Secretary Robert Wilkie @ Thu Jul 30, 2020 9:30am - 10am (EDT) (b)(6) va.gov, invite.ics, SecVa Tps.docx

Here is Sam Jackson's (producer) phone number: (b)(6)

They asked for 30 minutes, but I told them 20 minutes was a hard stop.

Jordan

From: Sam Jackson (b)(6) govexecmediagroup.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 8:00 AM
To: VA Public Affairs <VAPublicAffairs@va.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Interview Request: Secretary Robert Wilkie for Discussion with Government Executive Editor

Good morning,

I hope you're doing well! I'm reaching out from Government Executive Media Group to invite Secretary Robert Wilkie to speak in a digital 1-on-1 interview with Government Executive Editor-in-Chief Tom Shoop. This interview is part of our new recorded discussion series "Up Close: Conversations with Federal Leaders." We would be honored to have Secretary Wilkie sit for an exclusive interview on leadership during times of change, how the pandemic has changed the way your agency approaches initiatives like health records modernization, and more to educate and inform our audience of federal government employees.

Would Secretary Wilkie be available to participate in a fireside chat interview? We'll hold a prep call to cover interview logistics and discussion topics in advance. As far as recording the conversation, we're planning to use Zoom for Gov and will work around dates/times of your best availability.

Additional details:
When: Recording time/date flexible
Where: Recorded remotely on Zoom for Gov
Interview Length: 30 minutes
Interview Format: Moderated 1-on-1 Discussion
Moderator: Tom Shoop, Editor-in-Chief, Government Executive
Viewership: Online audience of 200+ federal government employees with some representation from nonprofits, academia and industry
Interview Underwriter: Tableau

Will you be able to participate? Please let me know if you have any questions!
I hope you're doing well! I'm reaching out from Government Executive Media Group to invite Secretary Robert Wilkie to speak in a digital 1-on-1 interview with Government Executive Editor-in-Chief Tom Shoop. This interview is part of our new recorded discussion series "Up Close: Conversations with Federal Leaders." We would be honored to have Secretary Wilkie sit for an exclusive interview on leadership during times of change, how the pandemic has changed the way your agency approaches initiatives like health records modernization, and more to educate and inform our audience of federal government employees.
Here is the invite for Thursday:

-----Original Appointment-----
From: Eason, William (Jordan) J. on behalf of "sjackson@govexecmediagroup.com"
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 17:12:28 +0000
To: S. (Pro Sphere Tek)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Invitation: Government Executive Interview: Secretary Robert Wilkie @ Thu Jul 30, 2020 9:30am - 10am (EDT)@va.gov
Attachments: invite.ics

You have been invited to the following event.

**Government Executive Interview: Secretary Robert Wilkie**


Where: https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1600310100?pwd=RXdUVHd2eFdFOFluVEIFVjVYbmRlZz09 (map)

Calendar: @va.gov

Who:
- @govexecmediagroup.com - organizer
- @govexec.com
- @va.gov
- @govexec.com - optional

more details »
Zoom for Gov
link: https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1600310100?pwd=RXdUVHd2eFdFOFluVEIFVjVYbmRlZz09

Going? @va.gov? Yes - Maybe - No more options »

Invitation from Google Calendar

You are receiving this courtesy email at the account william.eason@va.gov because you are an attendee of this event.

To stop receiving future updates for this event, decline this event. Alternatively you can sign up for a Google account at https://www.google.com/calendar/ and control your notification settings for your entire calendar.
Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to send a response to the organizer and be added to the guest list, or invite others regardless of their own invitation status, or to modify your RSVP. Learn More.
The Department of Veterans Affairs is unified with its federal partners in leading the medical response to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Within days of the first confirmed COVID-19 case, VA began implementing a comprehensive response and operations plan to protect our Veterans, their families and the workforce.

THE VA IS SUPPORTING STATES AND VETERANS’ GROUPS DURING COVID-19
- The Department of Veterans Affairs is assisting a total of 46 states and territories with their Coronavirus response. It has accepted mission assignments from FEMA in 28 states and territories.
- The VA is providing humanitarian aid to another 21 states and territories.
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VETERANS’ TRUST IN VA IS AT RECORD LEVELS
- Veterans’ trust in the VA has reached a record high during this national emergency. In the second quarter of 2020, overall Veteran trust in the entire VA system rose to 80 percent, an all-time high and up 19 percentage points from when President Trump took office. Veterans’ trust in the VA’s outpatient services stands at an all-time high of 89 percent.
- From Q1 to Q2 in 2020, trust in the VA among male Veterans rose 6 percent, and it rose 10 percent for female Veterans, a strong sign that the VA is living up to its promise to expand care for women Veterans.
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 16 Jul 2020 11:11:33 +0000
Subject: HOLD - CALL w/SEN. Scott
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 13:11:33 +0000
Subject: Departure to Virginia
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 19:12:45 +0000
Subject: En Route to Springfield, VA
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HOLD (b)(5)
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 16:54:42 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD: Zoom Test
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD: National Defense Radio
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 14:39:48 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Travel to Columbus and Atlanta, GA
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 22 Jul 2020 10:58:47 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Cheney call
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 20 Jul 2020 15:50:54 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Phone Call w/ [b](5)
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 18:18:16 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: [b](6) IT follow up
From: RLW
Sent: Sat, 25 Jul 2020 16:09:13 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - WH Event on Suicide w/ (b)(6)
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 30 Jul 2020 14:33:20 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: 5:45pm Wheels up to Dayton International Airport
From: RLW
Sent: Fri, 24 Jul 2020 10:37:34 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Task Force Meeting
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 19:58:32 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD: Interview w/Martha Macallum, Fox News
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Virtual Townhall event
From: RLW
Sent: Fri, 17 Jul 2020 13:12:21 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD: VSO Call
HOLD - Travel to Colorado
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To: RLW
Subject: Hold: Call w/VSOs
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Call w/Sanford Brown
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 29 Jul 2020 11:44:00 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Call w/Sanford Brown
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 13 Jul 2020 16:13:17 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Phone Call w/FL Gov DeSantis
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 12:49:54 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD: Media
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 12:49:10 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Phone Interview w/ Bobbi Gruner, KSWO, Dallas, TX
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 1 Jul 2020 13:56:52 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Possible Task Force Meeting
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 16:18:27 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Possible trip to Pittsburgh
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 12:50:13 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Media
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 20:12:43 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Phone Call w/Sen. Reed
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 20:11:01 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Phone Call w/Sen. Reed
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 17:57:57 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD: Media
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<td>Subject:</td>
<td>8:35am ERT DCA</td>
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To: RLW
Subject: HOLD: DWS
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 14 Jul 2020 19:13:01 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Interview - SLC
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 13 Jul 2020 14:14:34 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Call w/GOV DeSantis
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 13 Jul 2020 11:21:37 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Call w/GOV DeSantis
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 29 Jul 2020 11:44:00 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Call w/Rep Bishop
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at Wilkie-Barre VAMC
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 30 Jul 2020 19:38:56 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: 5:31pm Wheels up from CLT to DCA
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Leadership briefing/Coin Recg./Tour
Lisa Vernon Sparks, Virginian-Pilot
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Screening
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 27 Jul 2020 20:11:17 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Facility Briefing & Tour
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 1 Jul 2020 19:37:41 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: LUNCH
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 20:21:34 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD *(6)
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 15 Jul 2020 13:17:03 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Lunch
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Media prep/avail
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 20:19:33 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: (b)(6)
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To: RLW
Subject: Leadership Briefing / Facility Tour
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 30 Jul 2020 14:55:28 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT to VACO
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 30 Jul 2020 14:32:39 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT Dulles
En Route to Airport
Introduction to COVID-19 Screening Area
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 13 Jul 2020 21:04:51 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: En Route VACO
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 16 Jul 2020 12:29:42 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: 3:15pm Wheels up to Dulles Airport
| From:     | RLW                                      |
| Sent:     | Thu, 30 Jul 2020 13:31:02 +0000         |
| To:       | RLW                                      |
| Subject:  | En Route to VACO                        |
En Route to VACO
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 27 Jul 2020 16:13:37 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Phone Call w/Rep Vicky Hartzler
From:        RLW
Sent:        Mon, 27 Jul 2020 15:21:02 +0000
To:          RLW
Subject:     Gate Transition / Boarding
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 27 Jul 2020 15:20:20 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Lunch
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 17:54:06 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Gate Transition / Boarding
ERT/Arrive at H. John Heinz III VAMC and screening
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Virtual (Skype) Staff Thank you
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 20:42:55 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: HOLD - Flight Departs to Illinois
Location TBD
Departure to Ohio
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 19:40:53 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Media Availability
From: RLW
Sent: Sun, 26 Jul 2020 16:38:00 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: En Route to VACO
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 14:26:10 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Meeting on Milwaukee
From:  RLW
Sent:  Tue, 28 Jul 2020 18:30:28 +0000
To:  RLW
Subject:  Travel to Colorado
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 15 Jul 2020 13:35:03 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at NY Harbor HCS
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 19:34:30 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Media Prep
From:          RLW
Sent:          Sun, 26 Jul 2020 16:36:47 +0000
To:            RLW
Subject:       En Route to (6)
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 15 Jul 2020 13:34:37 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at Residence Inn
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Leadership briefing/Coin recg./Tour
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 17:52:01 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Executive time
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Screening
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 17:51:36 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at PIT airport
En Route to Camp David
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: Lunch
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 19:12:48 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Introduction to Covid Screening Area
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 17:50:41 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at Forever Heart Apiary
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 20:36:25 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: OIG Interview w/ (b)(6) & (b)(6)
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 17:49:45 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at lunch
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: ERT/Arrive at Calverton NC
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 19:06:32 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Facility Tour
Meet w[De(la)] re: VSO Update
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 11:35:57 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: En Route - EEOB for [b](6)
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To: RLW
Subject: ERT / Arr Residence

Mission complete
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To: RLW
Subject: Media prep/avail
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 17:34:37 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Facility Tour
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 8 Jul 2020 20:50:29 -0000
To: RLW
Subject: Prep w/Dr. Stone for Meeting w/Senators Lott and Breaux
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 1 Jul 2020 19:42:47 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Conference call/Zoom/Skype Mtg w/ various newspapers (Hosted by InsideSources)
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 20 Jul 2020 20:51:02 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Ask [3467] when I can reserve hotels (Hampton-Butner 29 Jul)
Withheld pursuant to exemption
Duplicate Record
of the Freedom of Information
From:       RLW
Sent:       Thu, 9 Jul 2020 14:43:50 +0000
To:         RLW
Subject:    Intro to COVID Screening Area
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 30 Jul 2020 14:33:20 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: 5:45pm Wheels up from Dulles to Dayton International Airport
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<td>To:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject:</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ Senator Steve Daines</td>
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From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 18:29:49 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: TRAVEL - Cheyenne, Wyoming
Attachments: Invite for SECVA for Cheyenne NC Dedication Signed 7.28.20.pdf
**SECVA EVENT WORKSHEET**

1. **TO:**
   - [X] SECRETARY
   - [ ] DEPUTY SECRETARY
   - [ ] CHIEF OF STAFF

2. **TYPE OF EVENT**
   - [ ] CEREMONY
   - [X] OTHER (Spec/A)
     - Randy Reeves
     - Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs
     - National Cemetery Administration

3. **FROM**
   - Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs
   - National Cemetery Administration

4. **POINT OF CONTACT**
   - Tom Howard

5. **PHONE NUMBER**
   - [](b)(6)

6. **DATE OF EVENT**
   - 10/08/2020

7. **TIME**
   - TBD

8. **CONFLICT**
   - [ ] YES
   - [X] NO

9. **NAME OF EVENT**
   - Cheyenne National Cemetery Dedication

10. **VENUE LOCATION**
    - Cheyenne National Cemetery,
    - Cheyenne, WY

11. **TYPE OF SPEECH**
    - Announcement/Dedication

12. **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES** (Please include event issues and VA position)
    - This dedication helps demonstrate VA's commitment to our Veterans and our continued improvements and efforts to ensure we provide all Veterans and their families with the benefits they have earned and deserved. This new National Veterans Burial Ground is part of NCA's Rural Initiative and will increase the number of Veterans we are able to serve in Wyoming.

13. **MEDIA EXPECTED**
    - [ ] YES
    - [X] NO

14. **TYPE OF AUDIENCE**
    - Public, VSO, Media, Congressional

15. **EXPECTED NUMBER OF ATTENDEES**
    - 20

16. **DRESS ATTIRE**
    - [X] BUSINESS
    - [ ] BUSINESS CASUAL
    - [ ] CASUAL

17. **SPOUSE INVITED**
    - [X] YES
    - [ ] NO

18. **COORDINATION**

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<td>[ ] NO</td>
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19. **COSVA**

| [ ] ACCEPT | [ ] REGRET | COMMENTS |
| [ ] IF DESIRED | [ ] REFER TO | (Specify below) |

20. **SECVA/DEPSECVA DECISION**

| [ ] ACCEPT | [ ] REGRET | COMMENTS |
| [ ] REFER TO | (Specify below) |

21. **SCHEDULING**

| [ ] ACCEPT | [ ] REGRET LETTER | COMMENTS |
| [ ] REFER TO | (Specify below) |

**VA FORM 0908b**
MAR 2009

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The document contains a worksheet for planning a specific event, with details about the type of event, contact person, date, time, location, name, type of speech, strategic objectives, media expected, audience type, number of attendees, dress code, spouse invitation, and coordination. The worksheet also includes sections for Cosva, Secva/Depsecva decision, and scheduling.
## SECVA CALENDAR WORKSHEET

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<th>TO:</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ SECRETARY</td>
<td>□ BRIEFING</td>
<td>□ OFFICE CALL</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ DEPUTY SECRETARY</td>
<td>□ DECISION</td>
<td>□ CONFERENCE ROOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ CHIEF OF STAFF</td>
<td>□ INFORMATION</td>
<td>□ OTHER (Specify) Cheyenne, WY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### REQUESTED DATE(S)

Proposed Date October 8, 2020

### LENGTH

1 hour

### PRINCIPAL ATTENDEES

USMA, Public, Veterans, VSOs, Media

### BRIEFING POINT OF CONTACT

Tom Howard

### PHONE NUMBER

(606)

### OTHER ATTENDEES

Congressional invitees, military officials, local officials.

### PURPOSE

The National Cemetery Administration requests the Secretary’s attendance and delivery of the keynote address at the dedication ceremony for the new Cheyenne National Cemetery in Wyoming. This new National Veterans Burial Ground is part of NCA’s Rural Initiative and will increase the number of Veterans we are able to serve in rural Wyoming.

### VA INTEREST

This dedication will demonstrate VA’s commitment to our Veterans and our continued efforts to ensure we provide all Veterans and their families with the benefits they have earned and deserve. Traditionally, dedications of new VA national cemeteries are well-attended (350-500) and attract considerable media attention (for example Pikes Peak N/C in May 2018 and Los Angeles N/C Columbarium Dedication in Oct. 2019). Due to COVID-19 participation at this event is limited to a small gathering. The event will inspire support for the new national cemetery.

### EXPECTED OUTCOME

Respectfully request the Secretary speak at the dedication to help amplify the importance of this new cemetery and VA’s support for our Veterans in Wyoming.

### OSVA STAFF COORDINATION

PREBRIEF REQUIRED

[ ] YES [ ] NO

READ AHEAD DUE DATE

COMMENTS

### EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

COMMENTS

### ACTION

[ ] APPROVED [ ] DISCLAIMS

SCHEDULED FOR

DATE

TIME

VA FORM 0908a

MAR 2009

Adobe LiveCycle Designer 8.2
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 28 Jul 2020 17:44:30 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Phone Call w/VSOs

Ticket No. A101389FY20
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 19:04:37 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Intro to COVID Screening Area
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 1 Jul 2020 16:01:32 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: 4:45pm - Wheels up to DCA

1645 WHEELS UP TO RONALD REAGAN WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT (DCA)

American Airlines 3960 DTW-DCA 1645-1815 1 hr 33 min
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 17:40:31 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: ERT / ARR MARRIOTT COURTYARD BATTLE CREEK

~ 1 hr 45 min / 117 mi
Location TBD (enroute to VA ANN ARBOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
Drive Time: 1 hr 10 min / 74.9 miles
~30 min/24.5 mi
25 min / 19.3 miles
~35 min / 24.2 mi
~3 hr 15 min / 192 mi
Location TBD / enroute to John D. Dingell VA Medical Center, 4646 John R St
Detroit, MI 48201
Drive Time: ~25 min / 19.3 miles
~30 min / 24.5 miles
~15 min / 4.9 miles
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 18:00:10 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Wheels Up to DCA

Delta Airlines 2630 DTW-DCA 2030-2151
Total travel time: ~1 hr 21 min
~30 min / 24.9 mi
~ 1 hr 45 min / 117 mi
RON
~25 min / 17.4 mi
~20 min / 9.7 mi
We have locked in an interview with Government Executive Media Group next Thursday morning at 9:30 am. This will be done virtually, so I’ll get those exact details to you soon.

Thanks,
Jordan

Jordan Eason
Director, Media Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
All –

This email is being sent to assistants, essential staff, and military aides.

The next White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday July 15th. More details including timing will be provided next week.

As always, thank you for your patience and flexibility. Have a great weekend!

Sincerely,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
All — we have a taker for Monday from 1:30-2. The reporter wants to start at 1:45 and has been told that 2 p.m. is a hard stop. This will be a Zoom interview and reporter will send call details. Prep materials to follow.

v/r

OUTLET: WAAY — TV (Huntsville, AL — ABC affiliate)
REPORTER: Marie Waxel
DATE/TIME: Monday, Aug 3, 1:45-2 EASTERN
INTERVIEW TYPE: Zoom (taped)
Good afternoon,

This message is being sent to assistants, essential staff, and military aides.

The **White House Coronavirus Task Force** will not meet for the remainder of the week. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, August 4th. An email with more details will be sent on Monday afternoon.

Thank you,

(b)(6)
Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<td>Daily Sync Mtg</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Coronavirus TF</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>1-877-446-3914</td>
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<td>Code: (b)(8)</td>
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</table>
Ladies,

I’m picking the date for the next Women’s Forum in September. I knows it is a ways out but would September 16th work on your end? September 16 @ 1pm?

It should be just like last time.....virtual with SecVA speaking for about 5 -10 minutes in her office.
### Daily Briefing Book

Friday, August 14, 2020

**SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
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<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>1-877-446-3914</td>
<td>Code: (b)(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 – 5:00 pm</td>
<td>VHA's COVID19 Update</td>
<td>Rm 1070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:45 – 8:15 am</td>
<td>Daily Sync Mtg</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:30 am</td>
<td>VA Leasing Process Briefing</td>
<td>OBCR Tab 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Coronavirus Task Force Mtg 1-877-446-3914</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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</table>

Code: *(b)(6)*
September 10th
Task Force Meeting 10:00 am
Governor Proclamation Virtual Signing 11:00 am

- Virtual
- Task Force Meeting Topics:
  - Update on PREVENTS Roadmap progress
  - Progress on REACH Public Health Campaign
  - Briefing and Participation in Governor Proclamation Signing occurring at 11:00 am
- Availability request (We understand leadership is scheduled to attend the task force meeting. Inquiring also about the 11:00 am signing if there is interest in leadership attending.)
  - SECVA – we request the SECVA give 5 minutes of remarks at the Task Force Meeting and 5 minutes of remarks at the Virtual Proclamation Signing
  - DEPSEC
  - COS
- Also to be invited:
  - Task Force Members
  - Governors that have agreed to sign the Proclamation
  - Director
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 15:23:12 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Interview w/ Mark Maxwell, WCIA-TV, Champaign, IL (CBS Affiliate)
Attachments: Quad - Mark Maxwell - WCIA.pptx
Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5)

of the Freedom of Information
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 15:23:12 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Zoom Interview w/ Mark Maxwell, WCIA-TV, Champaign, IL (CBS Affiliate)
Attachments: Quad - Mark Maxwell - WCIA.pptx

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79334490714?pwd=amlvL1ZWVFR1NElCZmNwUkVKS2dUdz09

Meeting ID: 793 3449 0714
Passcode: [REDACTED]
Page 2 of 2

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5)

of the Freedom of Information
### DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Wednesday, July 8, 2020**  
SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>7:45 – 8:15 am</td>
<td><strong>Daily Sync Mtg</strong></td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 – 9:00 am</td>
<td>Prep w/OM re: OIG Mtg &amp; Financial Auditors</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00 am</td>
<td>OIG/OM re: Risk of Misstatements in VA’s Financial Statements</td>
<td>OBCR</td>
<td>Tab 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:00 am</td>
<td>(b)(6), (b)(7)(F)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg 1-877-446-3914</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Bi-weekly Call w/ Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz ** She will call x (b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>PREVENTS Virtual Roundtable w/Faith Based Leaders ** Webex address on flyer</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 – 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Weekly Call w/ SVAC Moran &amp; Tester 1-877-446-3914 Code: (b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 5</td>
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8/21/2020 12:41 PM
From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr. on behalf of VHA Healthcare Operations Center
Sent: Sat, 18 Jul 2020 14:05:31 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: COVID-19 Weekend Support Coordination Meeting

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr. on behalf of VHA Healthcare Operations Center
Sent: Saturday, July 18, 2020 10:05:08 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.; Powers, Pamela
Subject: COVID-19 Weekend Support Coordination Meeting

When: Occurs every weekend day from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM effective 7/4/2020 until 7/19/2020. (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Updated Invite to include call-in number

Join Microsoft Teams Meeting
+1 872-701-0185 United States, Chicago (Toll)
Conference ID: (b)(6)

Local numbers | Reset PIN | Learn more about Teams | Meeting options
Hi,

Hope all is well. Leading up to the Department’s FY2022 Budget Submission to OMB, OM would like to secure times on SECVA’s calendar for the following:

What: Four 30 minute FY2020 SECVA Budget Briefing placeholders
Why: Placeholders for VA CFO’s FY2022 Budget Overview and select Administration Budget Briefings for SECVA strategic trade-off decisions.
When: July 27-31
Where: OBCR plus virtual meeting option
Who: Pam Powers, Brooks Tucker, Chris Syrek, Jon Rychalski, Ed Murray, Andrew McIlroy, Jerome Pannullo, and Anc

Once locked-in, we will follow-up with which Administration leadership teams will be brief each session providing the POCs and read-aheads.

Side note: I am not sure if I formally introduced you to who is our OM Front Office Executive Assistant. Please let Romy and me know if you ever have any questions or concerns,

Thank you! Have a great holiday weekend!

Chief of Staff
Office of Management
Department of Veterans Affairs
Email: @va.gov
Phone:
Withheld pursuant to exemption
(b)(5)
of the Freedom of Information
July 27 @ 11:45 (15 minutes max)

From: (b)(6) @va.gov

Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 2:01 PM
To: (b)(6) @va.gov;
Subject: RE: R. Harvey Retirement

Is this with the Deputy or by himself.

We have time on 7/27 or 7/28 if this works for Ruby.

Thanks.

From: (b)(6) @va.gov

Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 11:38 AM
To: (b)(6) @va.gov;
Subject: R. Harvey Retirement

Ladies,

Ms. Ruby Harvey is retiring at the end of July. Ms. Powers is submitting her for a Distinguished Career Award but would also like to provide her a 15 minute slot to meet with SecVA and receive a coin. She is hesitant to come in due to covid so we may end up doing it via video in DepSec office.

Can you give me a 15 slot toward the end of the month so I can reach out to her and set this up?

Office of the Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes of each honest worker. — Helen Keller
Ms. Ruby Harvey
Retirement Talking Points – 7/27/20

- Good morning and welcome. Thank you for joining us today, either in person or virtually. It is good to connect with everyone for such a special purpose.
- We are here to celebrate and recognize Mrs. Ruby Harvey for exceptional service to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) from August 2009 through July 2020 and wish her farewell as she retires.
- Ruby, it is with great pleasure that all of us gather to honor you and your many accomplishments. We admire your contributions and know that your legacy will continue well past today.

I’d like to share a few career highlights at this time:

- Mrs. Ruby Harvey served with honor and distinction in numerous positions. Her unwavering leadership, strength, and dedicated public service added immeasurably to VA’s mission of serving our Nation’s Veterans, their families, and survivors.
- She provided unparalleled service, especially during her tenure as Executive Director for the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, where she led an office that exceeded its goals in supporting the growth and economic opportunity of 14,000 Veteran-Owned Small Businesses by leveraging the federal procurement system and expanding participation of procurement-ready small businesses.
- As the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Acquisition Program Support (APS) she improved access and visibility, establishing the first intranet website that published contact information and made the organization truly accessible to its customers. The website continues to be used today and is a strong resource for the acquisition workforce.
- As the Chancellor of the VA Acquisition Academy (VAAA), she guided her leadership team in the formal launch of the Supply Chain Management School (with 500+ trained students the first year and 7,000+ the following year), the establishment of the Senior Acquisition Leadership Training (SALT) Program in the Contracting Professional School, and the expansion of the Warriors to Workforce Internship Program in the Acquisition Internship School.
- Mrs. Harvey spearheaded an innovative training development approach that allowed the Academy staff to launch training on the Supreme Court’s Kingdomware ruling and the Vets First Act only two weeks following the issuance of related VA policy. This enabled the almost immediate training of over 2,100 procurement and 1,000 program management professionals in two months. These courses are still maintained and another example of the legacy she leaves.
- Mrs. Harvey’s advocacy and service are always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skillful execution. Her legacy is instrumental to the Department’s efforts to understand and strive to meet the
expectations of a more diverse Veteran population. Her tireless work on behalf of Veterans greatly contributed to VA’s mission, and her professionalism, and cooperative spirit reflect great credit upon her and her team.

Ruby, what a tremendous career! As a result of these successes, it is with pride that I present you with the Distinguished Career Award.

PRESENT AWARD/TAKE PICTURES

Ruby, would you like to say a few words to all who are gathered here in your honor?

RUBY SPEAKS

Thank you, Ruby. I speak for everyone when I say you will be both missed and thought of fondly and often.

Everyone, please enjoy the food, the music, and the visuals. Thank you for coming and have a great week!
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 22 Jul 2020 14:24:59 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FaceTime Interview w/ Laura Hussey, WEAR-TV, Pensacola, FL (ABC Affiliate)
Attachments: 200728 - Pensacola, WEAR-TV, Laura Hussey.pptx
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>FaceTime Interview w/ Laura Hussey, WEAR-TV, Pensacola, FL (ABC Affiliate)</td>
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<td>10:30 – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Zoom Test on Computer</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>WH Coronavirus Task Force</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>VHA re: FY22 Budget Briefing</td>
<td>OBCR</td>
<td>Tab 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:15 – 2:45 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ Cong Liz Cheney ** She will call us on</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30 – 5:00 pm</td>
<td>VHA’s COVID19 Update</td>
<td>Rm 1070</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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</table>
| 9:00 – 10:00 am | OIG/OM re: Risk of Misstatements in VA’s Financial Statements  
** Mr. Missal will attend in person  
** From CLA & will also attend in person | OBCR           | Tab 2 |
| 10:00 – 10:45 am | WH Coronavirus Task Force                                                         | SECVA Suite    |     |
| 12:00 – 1:00 pm | Lunch                                                                             | SECVA Suite    |     |
| 1:00 – 2:00 pm | WH IGA Call w/Tribal Leaders  
1-877-369-5243  
Code: [b](6) | SECVA Suite    | Tab 3 |
| 2:00 – 3:00 pm | PREVENTS Virtual Roundtable w/Faith Based Leaders                                 | SECVA Suite    | Binder |
| 3:30 – 4:00 pm | Bi-Weekly Call w/Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz  
** She will call us on | SECVA Suite    | Tab 4 |
| 5:00 – 5:30 pm | Weekly Call w/ SVAC Moran & Tester  
1-877-446-3914  
Code: [b](6) | SECVA Suite    | Tab 5 |
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00 am</td>
<td>Bi-Weekly w/Under Secretaries ** Dr. Stone attending for VHA ** Margarita Devlin attending for VBA ** Ron Walters attending for NCA</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30 am</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ Florida Governor DeSantis ** He will call on x4809 ** James Hutton &amp; Thayer will sit in ** Dr. Stone &amp; COS will sit in</td>
<td>SECVA Suite Tab 1</td>
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<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg 1-877-446-3914 Code: (b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>11:45 am - Noon</td>
<td>ERT (b)(6)</td>
<td>Tab 1</td>
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<td>1:00 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Phone Interview w/KUT, Austin, TX NPR</td>
<td>SECVA Suite Tab 2</td>
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<td>1:30- 2:30 pm</td>
<td>WH Coronavirus Task Force Mtg</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30 – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ Senator Boozman ** Senator will call us on x(b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite Tab 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 – 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Senator Collins Virtual Town Hall ** Call in at 6:25/6:30pm ** Town Hall will begin at 6:35pm</td>
<td>SECVA Residence Tab 4</td>
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<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30 am</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ b(5) ** He will call us on b(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 – 10:45 am</td>
<td>ERT b(6)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>WH Event on Suicide w/ b(6)</td>
<td>South Lawn</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 – 11:45 am</td>
<td>ERT VACO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45 am – Noon</td>
<td>Retirement/Award Presentation for Ruby Harvey ** Retiring at the end of July ** DEPSEC put her in for a DCA ** Other Senior Leaders joining by Webex</td>
<td>OBCR Tab 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30 – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>OM Overview re: FY 22 Budget Briefings</td>
<td>OBCR Tab 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 – 3:30 pm</td>
<td>VBA &amp; BVA re: FY22 Budget Briefings</td>
<td>OBCR Tab 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>OIT &amp; EHRM re: FY22 Budget Briefings</td>
<td>OBCR Tab 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 – 4:30 pm</td>
<td>FaceTime Interview w/ Josh Smith, WJHL-TV, Johnson City, TN (ABC/CBS Affiliate)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite Tab 6</td>
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<td>5:00 – 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ b(6) ** She will call b(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 / 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Interview w/Martha Macallum, Fox News ** via Mobile Studio</td>
<td>SECVA Residence Tab 7</td>
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</table>
From: RLW  
Sent: Thu, 30 Jul 2020 16:51:24 +0000  
To: RLW  
Subject: VA Leasing Process Briefing

Ticket No. A101390FY20

Hi [b](6) - OALC has been tasked to update the Secretary on the Departments leasing process, specifically,

- current “leasing authorities,” including those at the VISN and/or Medical Center level to mitigate the “industrial-age process.”

- draft legislation proposal to streamline leasing process (OALC-OEAM effort).

OALC will lead the brief and provide all read ahead documents.

I would offer that we invite OM, VHA, OGC, and OCLA to the meeting (some in person and VANTS line). Proposed attendees:

OSVA: Secretary, ADEPSEC, ACOS, and DCOS
OALC: Karen Brazell (attend in-person), Tony Costa (primary briefer), Mike Brennan (alt briefer), and Phil Christy (dial in)
VHA: Dr. Stone, Dr. Lieberman, Renee Oshinski, Deb Kramer, Ed Litvin, and [b](6)
OM: Jon Rychalski, Ed Murray, and Brett Simms (OM’s subject matter expert)
OGC Real Property Law Group: Bill Hudson and [b](6) (OGC’s Leasing subject matter expert)
OCLA: Cathy Haverstock
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>8:30 – 9:00 am</td>
<td>Major b)(6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00 am</td>
<td>Randy Reeves re: 2nd Inaugural Plaque Dedication</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 – 10:15 am</td>
<td>Phone Interview w/ Will Hutchison, KSWO-TV, Lawton, OK</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ John Hesse</td>
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<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>1:00 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ Senator Reed b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>202-228-0808</td>
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<td>2:00 – 2:30 pm</td>
<td>FaceTime Interview w/ Randall Kerr, WRAL-TV, Raleigh, NC (NBC Affiliate)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 4</td>
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<td>5:15 – 5:45 pm</td>
<td>ERT 101 Constitution Ave, NW, Office L-120 (base of Senate side of Capitol)</td>
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<td>** Need to arrive by 5:45 pm</td>
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<td>6:00 – 6:30 pm</td>
<td>Interview w/ OAN b)(6)</td>
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<td>6:30 pm</td>
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<td>Daily Sync Mtg</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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</table>
| 9:00 – 10:00 am | Virtual Media Session w/ Defense Writers Group  
** Will be done via Webex | OBCR Tab 1        |                        |
| 11:00 – 11:30 am | Prep for WH Task Force Mtg  
1-877-446-3914  
Code (b)(6) | SECVA Suite         |                        |
| 12:00 – 12:45 pm | Lunch                                                                | SECVA Suite       |                        |
| 12:45 – 1:00 pm | ERT 529 14th St, NW, National Press Club                             |                   |                        |
| 1:00 – 2:00 pm | Opening Remarks: Launch of PREVENTS Public Health Campaign            | Tab 2             |                        |
| 2:00 – 2:30 pm | ERT VACO                                                             |                   |                        |
| 2:30 – 3:00 pm | Weekly Call w/ HVAC Takano & Roe  
1-877-446-3914  
Code (b)(6) | SECVA Suite Tab 3        |                        |
| 3:30 – 5:00 pm | VHA’s COVID Update                                                   | Rm 1070           |                        |
| 6:00 pm       | Interview w/ Liz MacDonald, “The Evening Edit”, Fox Business News    | SECVA Residence Tab 4 |                        |
Hello, I’m VA Secretary Robert Wilkie.

I’m honored to open this year’s Patient Experience Virtual Awards Ceremony.

VA is the institution with the most noble mission in the Federal Government: caring for those who have “borne the battle.”

That’s why my prime directive for VA has always been providing excellent customer service.

Our customers are Veterans, those courageous men and women who raised their hands and put on the uniform when our country called.

The Patient Experience Awards being presented today recognize those in VHA who are leading the way in customer service . . . care and innovations that are nationally recognized for how they improve Veterans’ lives.

Today’s recipients have demonstrated a deep commitment to responsive, reliable patient care that ensures the very best patient experience.
My congratulations to you.

But I also want to congratulate all VHA staff who dedicate their lives to providing the best, most compassionate care to Veterans.

Every one of them is building stronger and stronger bonds of trust between our Veterans and VA.

So I am deeply grateful to all of you—for your tireless efforts and for the emotionally resonant care you give Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors, especially in a time of crisis.

... 

In a time of crisis long ago, on the night before the Allies launched the liberation of Europe in June 1944, Gen. Ridgway relied on the promise God made to Joshua—“I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

When we get right down to it, our work is about serving America’s great men and women, Veterans whom we cannot and will not forsake.

God bless you and your families and this great country.
Page 2 of 2

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5)

of the Freedom of Information
Good morning,

Yes, 11:30am on Monday works for Administrator Verma. Here is the dial-in for the call:

Access Information
1. Please call the following number:
   WebEx: 1-877-267-1577
2. Follow the instructions you hear on the phone.

Your WebEx Meeting Number: (b)(6)

Thanks,
Page 2 of 2

Withheld pursuant to exemption
(b)(5)

of the Freedom of Information
From: RLW
Sent: Thu, 16 Jul 2020 14:51:53 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: RAH
Attachments: July 20 2020.docx
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<td>9:00 – 9:30 am</td>
<td>Voice Recording for Virtual VA One-Stop (Veterans Experience Center) ** Dr. Davis &amp; (b)(6) will come up for the voice recording</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 1</td>
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<td>10:00 – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Bi-Weekly Phone Call w/ VSOs</td>
<td>OBCR</td>
<td>Tab 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Coronavirus Task Force Mtg 1-877-446-3914 Code: (b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Monthly Mtg w/ OIG Mike Missal</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 – 2:30 pm</td>
<td>Video Taping for VEO’s Open to the PX Symposium</td>
<td>Broadcast Center</td>
<td>Tab 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 – 4:30 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ CMS Adm Verma ** Dr. Lieberman will join call 1-877-267-1577 Code: (b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 – 5:00 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/ Senator Scott (FL) 1-800-767-1750 Code: (b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 4</td>
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Withheld pursuant to exemption
(b)(5)
of the Freedom of Information
Hello, I’m Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie.

COVID-19 has disrupted the lives of millions of Americans and billions more around the globe.

But the virus doesn’t absolve VA from its responsibility to care for Veterans. And as I’m sure you agree, your role as a member of the department’s advisory committees, which cover health, research, benefits and underserved Veterans, is as important now as it ever was.

That’s why I’m glad your work will continue virtually. The VA has come through a period of dramatic transformation over the last few years,
and we value your continued input as we work to ensure VA serves the needs of today’s Veterans.

We are not the same VA you read about in the press six years ago.

We are more than a year into the MISSION Act, which has given real, permanent choice to more than 2.1 million Veterans.

But giving Veterans access to community care doesn’t mean we’re winding down VA care, as some feared. In fact, the opposite is true.

We completed a record 59.9 million appointments in the last fiscal year. More than 90 percent of Veterans trust the care they get at VA, and trust is rising among both men and women Veterans – nearly 87 percent of our women Veterans trust the care they get at VA.
VA is working better than it has in recent years because we made customer service a priority, we are committed to modernization, and we brought accountability back to the department.

We’re finding new ways to serve Veterans by building partnerships. We’ve worked with local organizations to end Veteran homelessness, and we’re applying that same principle to our efforts to end Veteran suicide.

When COVID-19 emerged, we quickly adapted to ensure the continued delivery of health care, benefits and memorial services in the safest way possible.

Our community living centers, which house some of our most vulnerable Veterans, controlled the spread of the virus far more effectively than many non-VA nursing homes.
Our VA-wide infection rate remained low among our staff, in the neighborhood of one half of one percent. And we had the capacity to fulfill our Fourth Mission, which is to support the entire U.S. health care system in times of crisis.

As much as we’ve done, we have more to do.

We are about the expand the Caregiver program, which will help family members who deliver care to thousands of our nation’s heroes.

We are accomplishing the difficult but important task of aligning our electronic health records with those of the Defense Department.

And we are working to improve the delivery of care to women Veterans and rural Veterans who rely on telehealth services.
Whether you’re a new member of an advisory committee or a seasoned expert, I welcome your participation and input as this work continues, and I look forward to collaborating on these shared goals.

In this way, we will together fulfill a promise this nation has made to those who stood up, took the oath and wore the uniform in defense of this nation.

Thank you.

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<td>8:30 – 9:00 pm</td>
<td>Radio Interview w/ Sam Malone, Houston, TX</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:30 am</td>
<td>(b)(6) &amp; Traci re: Upcoming Speeches</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30 am</td>
<td>Video Tape for 2020 VFW Virtual Convention</td>
<td>Broadcast Center</td>
<td>Tab 3</td>
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<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg 1-877-446-3914</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>11:30 am – Noon</td>
<td>IT Folks to Work on SECVA Cell Phone</td>
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<td>Phone Call to Governor Sununu ** We call cell @ (b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 4</td>
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<td>2:00 – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Bi-Weekly Phone Call w/VSOs</td>
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<td>(TBD)</td>
<td>White House Coronavirus Task Force</td>
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<td>4:15 – 4:45 pm</td>
<td>Introduction of (b)(6) Office of the Vice President ** DEPSEC &amp; COS to sit in</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 6</td>
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Hope you're well. Senator Dole sends her warm regards and Rashi says hi.

I reached out to Pam last week about the launch of our major Covid-relief program. The Foundation, VA, and Carelinx are rolling out a national FREE respite program to veteran families impacted by Covid-19. We've been working arm and arm with VA to build this out toward a national launch on August 4th. We're hoping to do a live spot on Fox & Friends and/or another morning show. It will show a substantive/innovative/direct impact response to Covid-19. And we're already getting more donations from other entities to grow the pot of respite dollars available.

The timing would be August 4th in the AM.

Thanks so much,
Sir,

Thank you for agreeing to provide an introduction to the PX Symposium I mentioned at the off-site. Your team has worked wonders (despite short notice) to enable us to tape your welcome to all of VHA next week.

Another opportunity I mentioned at the off-site was the upcoming pilot for the Virtual – VA-One Stop Service Centers (Veteran Experience Action Centers – VEACs).

VEO would like to respectfully request you provide a short voice (Interactive Voice Response - IVR) recorded “welcome” to Veterans participating in this event which will be piloted at the end of the month in Jacksonville FL with the FL Department of Veterans Affairs, local CVEB and local VSOs.

Your recording will welcome all participating Veterans (pilot estimate 500 rural, disabled and women Veterans in the catchment area) to this event which will offer them an opportunity to address ALL their care, benefits and service concerns in one virtual appointment.

Your recording can be done via smartphone or through other means utilized by VA to record an MP3 file. Your welcome will be heard by Veterans prior to their direct connection to the support team (ALL VA Administrations, the FL SDVA and local provider organizations).

Suggested IVR:
“Hello, this is Secretary Robert Wilkie and it is an honor to welcome you to our first Virtual Veteran Experience Action Center where all the resources of the VA and our state and local partners will be available to address your care, benefits and resource needs from wherever you are. We thank you for your service and for the honor of assisting you today.”

Attached is a copy of the event flyer and the Internal One-Pager for reference. Communications will be executed during the event and all those unable to participate will be contacted for assistance and follow up.

Thank you for your participation in this important event which we intend will pave the way for Virtual-VEACs in communities across the country starting in September.

V/r, Lynda
VIRTUAL NORTHEAST FLORIDA
VETERANS EXPERIENCE
ACTION CENTER

July 29 - 31, 2020

Get assistance on:
- VA Claims and Appeals
- VA Healthcare Eligibility and Enrollment
- Community Service and Support referral
- VA and Florida State Veterans Benefits Assistance
- Education, Employment and Pro Bono Legal Referral
- Family Member, Caregiver and Survivor Assistance

REGISTER NOW. There are a limited number of appointments available.

VETERANS EXPERIENCE ACTION CENTER

Sponsored by The Northeast Florida Community Veterans Engagement Board

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

VA
FDVA
WV
United Way of Northeast Florida
Ascension St. Vincent's
VIRTUAL NORTHEAST FLORIDA
VETERANS EXPERIENCE ACTION CENTER

July 29 - 31, 2020

Get assistance on:
» VA Claims and Appeals Status and Filing
» VA Healthcare Eligibility and Enrollment
» Community Service and Support referral

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» Education, Employment and Pro Bono Legal Referral
» Family Member, Caregiver and Survivor Assistance

REGISTER NOW There are a limited number of appointments available.

Sponsored by The Northeast Florida Community Veterans Engagement Board

Supporting Partners

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
United Way of Northeast Florida United Way
The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Gulfstream
FDVA Ascension St. Vincent's
Northeast Florida Virtual Veteran’s Experience Action Center (V-VEAC)

What is the Northeast Florida Virtual Veteran’s Experience Action Center (V-VEAC)?

- A collaborative partnership between Veterans service and support organizations of all types at all levels of the government and the private sector to address and seek to solve issues experienced by each individual Veteran, family member, caregiver, and survivor on the spot, as part of the virtual engagement.
- V-VEAC can result in engagement and assistance to over 360 clients per day; filing of 150+ claims, enrollment of 60+ in the VA HCS, and $300,000 in retroactive awards.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs, including the Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Healthcare Administration, National Cemetery Administration, and The Vet Center will partner with The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, The Florida Association of County Veterans Service Officers, The Northeast Florida Community Veterans Engagement Board (CVEB), United Way 211 and multiple Community partners to provide services to Veterans, family members, caregivers, and survivors in the regional area.

Why should we have Northeast Florida V-VEAC?

- Social distancing has impacted mass gatherings; virtual outreach provides an effective, alternative method to provide needed services to VA customers. The V-VEAC allows engagement of hard-to-reach Veterans; such as women, homeless and elderly, in order to evaluate and remedy issues during virtual engagement.
- VEACs are proven to be very effective to reach Veterans in a geographic area with all of VA’s services, and those of state and community partners, in a one-stop event.
- Projected impact of JAX Pilot (Five County Area)
  - Over 500 Veterans will receive personal service
  - Marketing the V-VEAC has the potential to reach an estimated 450,000 Veteran stakeholders via multimedia promotion and publications in Northeast Florida.
  - Women: 13,050
  - Homeless: ~250
  - Unemployed: Notes: 11.2% Veteran unemployment (current estimate as high as 16%)
  - Seniors and caregivers: Veterans 65 and older 67,864, 44.6%
  - Transitioning Veterans: (~1,111 Transitioning Monthly)

What are some tips for success?

- The Northeast Florida Virtual Veterans Experience Action Center (V-VEAC) is a locally based, virtual event model in which the regional Veterans, family members, caregivers and survivors can be seamlessly connected to the full range of VA and community-based services and resources while focusing on a one-on-one person-centered approach.
- The V-VEAC includes VA, FL DVA, Florida Association of County Veterans Service Officers and other support resource organizations with capability to file, update and adjudicate claims; enroll in VA healthcare and schedule appointments; provide rapid housing and temporary financial assistance; and other holistic support actions.

For more information, please contact [b](6) at [b](6)@va.gov.

The way we treat Veterans today is the reason they will CHOOSE VA tomorrow.
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<td>** Last meeting was hosted by A/DEPSEC on July 1</td>
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<td>Prep for WH Mtg re: Federal Interagency Council on Crime Prevention &amp;</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>Improving Reentry</td>
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<td>2:00 – 2:30 pm</td>
<td>HOLD: Meeting w/DPC</td>
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From: RLW  
Sent: Mon, 13 Jul 2020 14:12:12 +0000  
To: RLW  
Subject: Meet w/ 

From: Powers, Pamela @va.gov>  
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2020 2:39 PM  
To: EOP/WHO @who.eop.gov>  
CC: WHO >  
Subject: Re: I keep forgetting  
Secretary is gone Monday and Tuesday. Back in on Wed. 
(b)(6) can help schedule some time. 
Pam  
Get Outlook for iOS  

From: S. EOP/WHO @who.eop.gov>  
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2020 1:31:31 PM  
To: Powers, Pamela @va.gov>  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: I keep forgetting  
Are there any particularly good days next week?  

(b)(6) Special Assistant to the President  
Domestic Policy Council  
O:  
C:  

From: Powers, Pamela @va.gov>  
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 5:47 PM  
To: EOP/WHO @who.eop.gov>  
Subject: RE: I keep forgetting  
Cool. Let me know when you want to come over.  

From: EOP/WHO @who.eop.gov>  
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 5:39 PM  
To: Powers, Pamela @va.gov>  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I keep forgetting
I got a signed book for SECVA in thanks for including me on the New Orleans trip that I have forgotten for months to give... would love to give to him at some point.

(b)(6)
Special Assistant to the President
Domestic Policy Council
O:
C:
1. Need help with a legislative fix for how we account for community care payments. Without it we need to set aside large amounts of funds that will run us ($5 billion) short in community care this year. We're transitioning to the same way DoD does TRCARE but need legislative authority.

2. Ask for his support on our FY 21 General Administration budget request of $413 million (House mark was $57 million lower). We take cuts year after year in this account and it's really starting to hurt. Won't have the funds to complete our police reform initiative, fully hire disaster preparedness staff and slows overall hiring because we cannot afford to fully fund our Human Resources function.
July 15, 2020 3:30PM
OM POC: Jon Rychalski, [b](6)
Driver: Proactive phone call about FY 2021 Budget
Subject: FY 2021 Budget request
Participants: Senator Boozman, SAC MilConVA Majority Clerk [b](6)
VA: SECVA, Jon Rychalski

PURPOSE OF EVENT/MEETING:
☐ Decisional ☐ Informational ☐ Pre-Event
☐ Remarks ☒ Other ☐ Courtesy Call

OVERVIEW OF EVENT:
Teleconferences with Member to discuss the Department’s FY 2021 Budget request

TALKING POINTS:

Timing of Obligations:
- VA seeks to clarify a provision in the next appropriate legislative vehicle regarding when obligations for care provided in non-VA facilities should be recorded.
- This one-time change in accounting standards would confirm current VA practice (started in FY 2019) and ensure VA has sufficient funding to provide Community Care throughout the remainder of this fiscal year.
- A review of the current practice has concluded that VA is not in compliance with the Recording Statute.
- The practice of obligating funds for community care at the time of authorization that was in place prior to FY 2019 resulted in large de-obligations and expired balances.
- Absent legislative action, VA will have to revert to its old practice of recording obligations at the time of authorization and record additional obligations for FYs 2019 and 2020 of $5.2 billion, which would result in a shortfall and force VA to stop authorizing care in the community.
- I need your support to get this legislative fix as soon as possible.

Transfer Authority for CARES Act Funding
- As you know, the CARES Act funding was based on the best information available at a time of great uncertainty.
- I believe VA has sufficient funding available to address the pandemic, but there are some areas where funding needs to be reallocated to best meet the needs of Veterans.
- Some items were not contemplated at the time of the original supplemental request:
  - Dramatic increase in overtime for VBA claims processors to address growing backlog of claims.
  - Updates to antiquated education claims system
  - Overtime for NCA employees to address surge in demand for interments, committal services, and memorial services as restrictions are lifted.
  - IT requirements for accelerated supply chain modernization, the need for which became more urgent as VA experienced supply chain challenges during the pandemic.
  - Veterans Canteen Service is a revolving fund that supports its operations through sales of food and goods at VAMCs. Due to the limited access to VA facilities, their revenue has been reduced.
- Transfers from medical care accounts can support these requirements.

**FY 2021 General Administration Appropriation**
- I need your support for the FY 2021 requested level of $413 million for VA staff offices.
- The FY 2021 House mark is $57 million below the FY 2021 request (14 percent reduction).
- The staff office budget has been flat since FY 2019.
  - $12 million below PB request in FY 2019
  - $13 million below PB request in FY 2020
  - House mark is $57 million below the FY 2021 PB
- Specifically,
  - Straight-line funding results in overall personnel cuts. Recent pay raises and the government’s increased contributions to FERS both increase FTE costs mandated by Congress result in a decrease in the number of personnel that can be supported by straight-line funding. This in turn reduces Staff Office support of front-line workers.
  - Eliminates all funding for Police Modernization (a new initiative) and for increased security costs
  - Prevents OGC from addressing increasing legal workload from the Accountability Act, MISSION Act, and for Veterans appeals.
  - Does not provide adequate funding for legislative affairs and public affairs to sustain their basic missions (both have been held constant for four straight years at levels below their requirements; House mark level does not support current on-board FTE for either office).
July 14, 2020

The Honorable John Boozman  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Military Construction,  
Veterans’ Affairs, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to thank you for your support to Veterans and to seek your continued support for Veterans health care by including a technical fix to accounting policies for care provided outside of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in the next appropriate legislative vehicle.

VA has expanded care provided to Veterans in the community through our successful implementation of Public Law 115-182, the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 (MISSION Act). To continue providing care in the community, improve operational efficiencies, and maintain a clean audit opinion, VA seeks to clarify through a provision in the next appropriate legislative vehicle when obligations for care provided in non-VA facilities should be recorded. This one-time change in accounting standards would confirm current VA practice and ensure VA has sufficient funding to provide Community Care throughout the remainder of this fiscal year. Additional details and proposed appropriation provision are provided in the enclosure.

Similar letters have been sent to the Chair and Ranking Members of the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies. Thank you for your continued support of our mission to provide services and benefits to our honored Veterans.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Wilkie

Enclosure
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Change in Timing of Obligations for Community Care

VA seeks a technical amendment to record obligations for medical care provided in non-VA facilities (Community Care) at the time of payment rather than at authorization. This is a one-time change in the application of accounting standards that has no impact on Veteran care or the cost of care. Without this change; however, VA will be unable to continue to provide Community Care, beginning in summer fiscal year (FY) 2020, due to insufficient funding.

Background
Prior to FY 2019, VA recorded obligations for Community Care when the care was authorized by a VA medical provider. For example, for a knee injury, a VA doctor might authorize community treatment for ten physical therapy sessions, an MRI, and even surgery, at a total cost of tens of thousands of dollars. VA would record an obligation for the total, but the Veteran might only complete three physical therapy sessions, costing only a few hundred dollars. Several months or years later VA would de-obligate the unneeded funds. Large balances of prior-year appropriations for Community Care expired, instead of being available to provide care for Veterans.

In FY 2019, VA started recording obligations for Community Care at the time that VA approved payment to health care providers, similar to the way the Department of Defense handles these types of claims. This change was enacted in the funding levels in the FY 2019 Appropriations Act. This had no impact on the actual cost of Veteran care but did produce a one-time budgetary savings of $1.8 billion in FY 2019 by shifting the recording of obligations to following fiscal years.

In a March 19, 2020 letter, the Government Accountability Office questioned VA’s new recording practice. Upon further review, VA’s and the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Offices of General Counsel concluded that VA’s change in recording practice violated the Recording Statute for Community Care contracts. To comply with the Recording Statute, VA would have to revert to its old practice of recording obligations at the time of authorization and record additional obligations for FYs 2019 and 2020 of $5.2 billion. This shifting of obligations back into FYs 2019 and 2020 would cause VA to be short on Community Care funds, which would force VA to stop authorizing care in the community.

Proposed Solution
VA and OMB propose a new provision to the next appropriations bill to clarify when Community Care obligations should be recorded. This has no impact on the actual cost of care for Veterans. It merely confirms current VA practice, while bringing VA into conformity with the Recording Statute.
Legislative Text – Appropriation Administrative Provision:

Sec. XXX. Hereafter, subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall record as an obligation of the United States Government amounts owed for hospital care or medical services furnished at non-Department facilities under title 38, United States Code, or Acts making appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs, on the date on which the Secretary approves: (i) a claim by a health care provider for payment or (ii) a voucher, invoice, or request for payment from a vendor for services rendered under a contract: Provided, That this section shall take effect as if enacted on October 1, 2018.
Page 1 of 2

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(6); (b)(7)(E)

of the Freedom of Information
Page 2 of 2

Withheld pursuant to exemption
(b)(6); (b)(7)(E)

of the Freedom of Information
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45 – 8:15 am</td>
<td>Daily Sync Mtg</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:30 am</td>
<td>Daily Sync Mtg Re: History Initiative Update</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>** COS will sit in</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg 1-877-446-3914 Code: b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 2:00 pm</td>
<td>Remarks: PREVENTS – Chamber of Commerce / Hiring Our Heroes  Virtual Event via Zoom</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 – 3:30 pm</td>
<td>OIG Interview  A/DEPSEC will be interviewed at 3:30-5pm  A/COS will also be interviewed at 5-6:30pm  Hutton, Cashour &amp; b)(6) will be interviewed on Aug 6</td>
<td>Rm 446</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 – 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/Moran &amp; Tester 1-877-446-3914 Code: b)(6)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 3</td>
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September 15th
Congressional Event

- Virtual
  - Coordinating with OCLA, pending VA leadership availability/interest in attending
- PREVENTS is planning to hold a virtual Hill event on September 15, during Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, to discuss the PREVENTS Roadmap and the REACH campaign with Members of Congress. At the event, Members would be encouraged to take the PREVENTS Pledge to REACH and to inspire their fellow members and constituents to take it as well. We would invite Task Force leadership and invite Rep. Susan Wild, a PREVENTS Ambassador, to speak.

The PREVENTS Office is in discussions with Representative Roe’s staff about the September event, and his office is considering sending a Dear Colleague letter and drafting a floor statement for Dr. Roe on Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and the Pledge. The staff also said that Dr. Roe could organize all Republican committee members to take the pledge and then challenge other committees and caucuses prior to the September 15 event. His office also will reach out to Chairman Takano and other members about the pledge and the event. PREVENTS also will work with OCLA to ensure that all proper notifications are made.

- Availability request
  - SECVA – we request the SECVA give 5 minutes of remarks at the Congressional Event
  - DEPSEC
  - COS
- Also to be invited
  - Task Force Members
  - Members of Congress
  - Director (b)(6)
I want to do this one. Let’s map out a plan on Monday

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 1, 2020, at 4:58 AM, va.gov wrote:

Sir – this on a Saturday in North Carolina. You depart on Friday and attend this and stay the weekend and then head to Ohio (Cleveland/Dayton/Columbus) where we have you the following Monday thru Wednesday. Thoughts?

From: ROBERT WILKIE @verizon.net
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 4:57 PM
To: va.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Invitation for Alive Day Celebration, August 8, 2020

See if I can make this.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bob Carey @empire-capitol.com
Date: June 30, 2020 at 1:35:58 PM MST
To: Verizon.net "Verizon.net"
Subject: FW: Invitation for Alive Day Celebration, August 8, 2020

Bob Carey
Principal
Empire-Capitol Strategies
@Empire-Capitol.com

<image001.jpg>

From: Bob Carey
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 16:18
To: va.gov; va.gov; va.gov; va.gov; va.gov; va.gov; Chris Syrek
Subject: Invitation for Alive Day Celebration, August 8, 2020

Sarah Verardo, our CEO, discussed this with Secretary Wilkie at the PREVENTS roll out, but we wanted to make sure you received the attached invitation.

VFW Post 2423 (Indian Trail, NC) will dedicate a bench to SGT Michael Verardo, USA (Ret.) in celebration of his tenth “Alive Day”. (bio is also attached.

This event is on Saturday, August 8th at 2:00pm at Jack Campbell Memorial Park, at the James B. Crump VFW Post, in Indian Trail, NC.

Many members of Congress from both North and South Carolina are planning to attend.

Feel free to reach out to any of TIF’s DC staff with questions, but please RSVP via email to Events@IndependenceFund.org, and cc atl@IndependenceFund.org.

We hope you will attend such a wonderful celebration!

Bob “Shoebob” Carey
CAPT, USN (Ret)
Chief Advocacy Officer

Mobile: atl@IndependenceFund.org
Email atl@IndependenceFund.org

1440 G St., NW, Suite 8105
Washington, DC 20005

Be a Hero for a Hero!
<image002.png>

<image003.jp>
## Daily Briefing Book

**Tuesday, August 4, 2020**

**Secretary Robert L. Wilkie**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45 – 8:15 am</td>
<td>Daily Sync Mtg</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 – 11:00 am</td>
<td><strong>HOLD:</strong> Dole Foundation COVID Roll Out</td>
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<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg</td>
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<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Call w/ HVAC Leadership re: COVID Updates</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30 – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Interview w/ National Defense Radio Show</td>
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<td>**We call (b)(6)</td>
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<td>4:00 – 4:30 pm</td>
<td>Call w/ Rep Bishop</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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<td>Daily Sync Mtg</td>
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<td>9:00 – 9:30 am</td>
<td>Upcoming Speeches &amp; Traci re: Upcoming Speeches</td>
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<td>10:00 – 10:30 am</td>
<td>Bi-Monthly OAWP Update</td>
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<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am – Noon</td>
<td>Phone Call w/HHS Secretary Azar ** Dr. Stone &amp; COS have been invited to sit in</td>
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<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 – 2:00 pm</td>
<td>Zoom Interview w/ Marie Waxel, WAAY-TV, Huntsville, AL (ABC Affiliate)</td>
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<td>2:30 – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz ** She will call us</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15 – 3:30 pm</td>
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<td>9:00 – 9:30 am</td>
<td>Office Call w/ [b(6)]</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 – 10:00 am</td>
<td>FaceTime Interview w/ Jason Raven, WIS-TV, Columbia, SC (NBC Affiliate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Quarterly Call w/Senators Tillis &amp; Tester 1-202-228-0808 Code:[b(6)]</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 am</td>
<td>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg 1-877-446-3914 Code:[b(6)]</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<td>12:00 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 2:00 pm</td>
<td>Virtual Editorial Board Meeting (Hosted by InsideSources)</td>
<td>SECVA Suite, Tab 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00 – 3:30 pm</td>
<td>FaceTime Interview w/Jed Boal, KSL-TV, Salt Lake City</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Good Afternoon All,

For awareness, below is a draft itinerary from Mrs. Pence’s office.

Her office confirmed we are permitted to book the same flights on July 29 and VA Protection vehicles will fit into their motorcade.

We will continue to forward information as it comes in.

Respectfully,

Office of the Secretary
Director of Mission Operations
810 Vermont Ave. Washington, DC

It was a pleasure to speak with you earlier today. Please find below the working scenarios we have for the July 29 visit to Pittsburgh. We of course welcome any feedback/questions your team has about this event, and look forward to having you join the calls we have scheduled next week with the lead contacts for the VA and Bee Bootcamp visits. We’ll also work to share briefing materials no later than noon on July 28, and hopefully a bit earlier.

Thanks, and have a nice weekend!
Page 2 of 3

Withheld pursuant to exemption

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of the Freedom of Information
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(b)(5)
of the Freedom of Information
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 19:34:06 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Meet w/Randy Reeves NCA re: Upcoming Trip to Illinois
ARRIVE CAMP BUTLER NATIONAL CEMETERY COMPLEX

EXECUTIVE TIME / SPEECH PREP

CEREMONY BEGINS

Run of Show

- Welcome (Director)
- Pledge of Allegiance (Assistant Director)
- Invocation (Chaplain)
- (TBD) - Introduction of Distinguished Guests
- Speaker
- Speaker (TBD - SECVA decides)
- Keynote Speaker (SECVA)
- Prayer of Dedication — Chaplain
- Dedication 2nd Inaugural Address Plaque Unveiling
- Interpretive Sign Unveiling
- Rifle Salute (Inter-Veterans Burial Detail of Sangamon County)
- Taps (Inter-Veterans Burial Detail of Sangamon County - Bugler)
- Closing

CEREMONY COMPLETE

MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Travel to Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (Optional)

VIP Tour of Museum (time TBD by SECVA schedule)

Depart for Lunch

Lunch (TBD)

Arrive Oak Ridge Cemetery

Lay Wreath Lincoln Tomb (Optional)

Depart
Camp Butler National Cemetery Guest List

Senator Richard Durbin
Senator Tammy Duckworth
Congressman Darin Lahood
Governor JB Pritzker
Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton
Establishing the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

On March 4, 1865, just weeks before his assassination, President Abraham Lincoln took his second oath of office. In his inaugural address, Lincoln spoke of the need to heal a divided nation. The last paragraph of that speech embodies the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) commitment to all who serve in the United States military.

“With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.”

In order to “consolidate and coordinate government activities affecting veterans,” a new government agency was established in 1930. Today, three VA administrations provide health, benefits, and memorial services to Veterans and their families.
Inspiring VA’s Mission

PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN’S SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations."

March 4, 1865

Type: Cast
Material: Bronze
Orientation: Landscape
Dimension: 20”x16”
Thickness: 3/8”–1/2” return at borders; ¼” in raised text

Front of plaque:
- Sculpted portrait of President Lincoln (NCA to provide image)
- Border style: Single line
- Raised border and letters: Brushed satin bronze
- Lettering: Times Roman Bold
- Color: Dark Bronze
- Texture: Smooth

Back:
- Standard casting return

Mounting:
- Post mount AND wall
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>8:45 – 9:15 am</td>
<td>Videotaping – DAV Virtual Convention</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 – 10:00 am</td>
<td>Zoom Interview w/Government Executive Media Group</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Zoom Interview w/ Mark Maxwell, WCIA-TV, Champaign, IL (CBS Affiliate)</td>
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<td>Tab 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am-12:30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30 – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Phone Call w/Senator Gardner ** Senator will call us</td>
<td>SECVA Suite</td>
<td>Tab 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 pm</td>
<td>Depart for Norfolk, VA</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From: RLW
Sent: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 14:41:07 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Dinner at French Embassy w/(b)(6)

From: [b]@diplomatie.gouv.fr>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 10:09 AM
To: [b]@va.gov >; WASHINGTON-AMBA Secsocial <secsocial.washington-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr>
Cc: [b]@va.gov >
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Invitation to a dinner for Amb. Dirk Wouters of Belgium on September 13

Bonjour (b)

Happy belated 4th of July! I hope this finds you and your loved ones well during these trying times since we last spoke.

You will find attached an invitation for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Madame Wilkie on behalf of Ambassador Philippe Etienne to a dinner we will be hosting in September to bid farewell to Ambassador of Belgium Dirk Wouters and his wife Katrin Wouters.

This dinner will take place on Sunday, September 13 at 7:00pm at the Résidence de France (2221 Kalorama Road NW, Washington DC 20009).

Please do let me know if you have any questions; we and the Wouters sincerely hope they will be able to join us!

Kind Regards,

[b]@diplomatie.gouv.fr

Social Secretary to the Ambassador of France
Résidence de France
2221 Kalorama Road, NW
Washington, D.C., 20008
Tel: (b)
[b]@diplomatie.gouv.fr
The Ambassador of France to the United States Philippe Étienne and Madame Patricia Étienne request the pleasure of the company of The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Madame Julia Wilkie at a dinner to bid farewell to Ambassador Dirk Wouters Ambassador of Belgium to the United States and Madame Katrin Wouters on Sunday, September 13, 2020 at seven o’clock in the evening Résidence de France 2221 Kalorama Road NW Washington, DC 20008

Kindly refer to the attached event protocol prior to accepting this invitation.

RSVP
secsocial.washington-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr

Invitation is non-transferable

Business Attire
The health and safety of our guests is the top priority of the Embassy of France. Due to the impact of the Coronavirus in the metropolitan area, the Embassy will be closely monitoring ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and data and will act and adapt accordingly.

To ensure the safety of our all of our guests during our events, we kindly ask that you observe the following protocol at the Résidence de France:

- Hand sanitizing stations will be available in the Résidence. We strongly encourage all guests to wash or sanitize your hands throughout the event.

- Guests are encouraged to wear a mask or appropriate face covering when not eating or drinking.

- Respect social distance guidelines by maintaining a distance of six feet with fellow guests and staff. To facilitate this, our staff size will be limited. All seating arrangements and guest lists will also take this distancing into consideration.

- Note that all Résidence staff will be wearing masks and gloves and will wash their hands frequently. All staff working the event will be in-house staff.

- If you are an individual at risk, if you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or if you or someone in your household have been or have felt sick in the past 21 days, we ask that you not attend.

If you have any questions about this event or protocol measures, please contact the Ambassador’s Social Secretariat at secdsocial.washington-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr
The brief would include both Margarita Devlin and VA’s Senior Fellow from the Army SGM (b)(6).

Background on the request: At the request of Secretary Wilke, the Army and VA created a Senior Fellowship program. Secretary Wilkie was familiar with the Department of Labor Fellowship from his time as the USD (P&R) and when he moved from DOD to VA, he asked the Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA) for a Senior Fellow. 3QFY19 SMA asked SGM (b)(6) to initiate the process. 2QFY20 SGM (b)(6) began the fellowship.

Duty Description: Senior Fellow serves as a military advisor and liaison between senior leadership of the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs; facilitates the collaboration of both parties to meet interagency agendas and strategic objectives focused on the transition of Servicemembers and their Families from military to civilian life and ensuring they receive the benefits that honor their service.
Ladies,

Ms. Powers has asked that I set up meetings with new staff member in VPOTUS Office. I haven't confirmed exactly who he would like to meet with but I'm assuming SecVA and COSVA. Looking at calendars, could we work something out for Monday, July 6th after between 3 and 4:30? Or July 8th between 3:30 and 5:00?

Best,

Pam,

Thank you for the email.

It would be great to meet in person with you and a few members of the VA Team.

I'll work with Teresa to determine the date and time.

Best,
Hi congrats on your new assignment. Happy to talk anytime. If you’re up to it, you’re welcome to come over here and meet a few members of the VA team....we’re just across the street. A phone call works fine too. I’ve cc’d my assistant for scheduling.

Pam

Pamela Powers
Acting Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
Office:  
Cell:  
@VA.gov

Good Afternoon Pamela,

I wanted to reach out to introduce myself as a new contact in the Office of the Vice President.

As your time and schedule allow, I would welcome a phone conversation to further introduce myself and learn more about your portfolio at the VA.

I look forward to working with you.

Best,

Office of the Vice President
Cell
Withheld pursuant to exemption
(b)(6)
of the Freedom of Information
Page 3 of 3

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5)

of the Freedom of Information
All -

There will be a **White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting** at **4:00pm** in the White House. All materials will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
All –

There will be a White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting on Wednesday, July 22nd at 2:30pm in the White House. All materials will be forthcoming.

Thank you,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
(b)(6)
From: EOP/OVP
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 13:54:28 +0000
To: EOP/WHO; EOP/NSC; EOP/WHOA; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO; EOP/WHO; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO; EOP/OVP; EOP/WHO;

Subject: [EXTERNAL] White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting
Importance: High

All –

There will be a White House Coronavirus Meeting on Friday, July 10th at St. Agnes School in Arlington, Virginia. For those unable to join in-person, there will be a call-in option from the White House.

Additional details have been shared with assistants, essential staff, and military assistants.

All materials for this meeting will be forthcoming.
Thank you,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
All -

There will be a **White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting** on Wednesday, July 22\textsuperscript{nd} at **2:30pm** in the White House. Materials attached.
Thank you,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
Page 04 of 17

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of the Freedom of Information
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 22 Jul 2020 10:58:47 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Phone call w/Rep. Cheney - She will call us
EXECUTIVE BRIEFING SUMMARY
Call with Rep. Liz Cheney
July 28, 2020; 2:15pm
Telecon (Cheney will call SECVA at [b](6)

POINT OF CONTACT: [b](6) OCLA; [b](6) (cell)

PURPOSE OF EVENT/MEETING: (check one)
☐ Decisional  ☐ Informational  ☐ Pre-Event
☐ Remarks  ☐ Other  ☒ Courtesy Call

OVERVIEW OF EVENT: A proactive telecon with the Congresswoman.

SECVA ROLE: Secretary Wilkie will participate in a telecon with the Congresswoman to discuss his priorities for the Department.

ATTENDEES:
- Robert Wilkie, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs
- Representative Liz Cheney (R-WY-AL)

OBJECTIVE:
- [b](5)
- 
- 
- 
- 

BACKGROUND:
- The No. 3 House Republican in the 116th Congress, Cheney is the highest-ranking woman in the party and the only woman in GOP leadership.
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of the Freedom of Information
Key Columbia, S.C. Issues: July 2020

# of Veterans enrolled in the Columbia VA Health Care System (CVAHCS) – 80,822

# of Veterans in CVAHCS catchment area – Approx. 263,000

COVID-19 Operations:
Since the beginning of March, the Columbia VA Health Care System has been focused on maintaining the safety of its veterans and staff while continuing to provide high quality care during the COVID-19 pandemic. The facility continues to provide only emergent and urgent care to veterans across the system.

- Strict safety measures have been implemented to prevent the spread and contraction of COVID-19 to include universal masking for every employee and veteran, entrance restrictions as well as thermal imaging temperature checks and screenings.
  - Thermal Imaging Cameras: Recently installed thermal imaging cameras at the facility protect employees and patients entering our facility. This technology provides quick, automatic temperature screening of people upon entry, up to 30 people at a time.

- The CVAHCS was selected as one of the first VA facilities to be approved for high volume COVID-19 laboratory testing and has since performed more than 15,700 COVID-19 tests for VA facilities across the Southeast, with an average turnaround time of 1.14 days, compared to 4-10 days in the community. Faster results allow providers to make timely treatment decisions for patients with positive results and reduce PPE usage. [https://www.columbiasc.va.gov/features/2020/Roche_Testing.asp](https://www.columbiasc.va.gov/features/2020/Roche_Testing.asp)
  - Additionally, as part of VA's fourth mission, the Columbia VA has supported all State Veterans Nursing Homes in South Carolina and Alabama (7 unique homes) by testing 100% of residents and staff (more than 2,600 COVID-19 tests) as well as providing critically needed PPE to these sites.

- Last week, AARP published a story regarding two Columbia VA veterans (a father and son) who both contracted COVID-19 and recovered due to the great care they received from the Columbia VA. Reporter Jason Raven (WIS) reported on the story in May.

- Reopening Plan:
  - We plan to reopen on August 10. This is being done in a staged approach to continue to maintain the safety of veterans and staff but will allow veterans more access to face to face services. Majority of services will start to resume to in-person care up to 25% of previous volume with the expectation that tele-based care will fully be maximized where deemed appropriate.

Telehealth/Access to Care:
Access to VA health care at the Columbia VA has never been as readily available as it is now. The Health Care System has been growing in proportion to the veteran population in the catchment area and expects the demand for outpatient services to continue to increase. The Columbia VA remains committed to ensure veterans can access the services the facility offers.
Given the unprecedented times that COVID-19 has created, like other VAs, the Columbia VA has increased the bandwidth and use of its telehealth program dramatically. The facility continues to provide most of its appointments virtually through VVC, which has become a great method for the staff to work with our veterans and their families at a distance.

- The facility has conducted more than 27,790 telehealth appointments between January and June 2020.
- Since January, the facility has used VVC for 13,003 unique patients, which represents a 1,657% increase compared to the same time last year.

Patient experience and customer service drives the Columbia VA. Veterans not only are very happy about the care that they receive at the facility, but they remain satisfied:

- Trust scores have increased from 84.3% to 88.7% from 2018 to present. The positive increase was enhanced due to the assistance patients have received from the Red Coat Ambassador (RCA) program (22 FTEs), whose sole purpose is to give each veteran a red-carpet welcome and experience from entry to exit. VHA is looking to model a national RCA program after the Columbia VA’s.

To meet the anticipated growth, the facility currently has been approved for $160 million in new/ongoing construction projects. This includes: Construction of a new Fisher House is anticipated this September; a parking garage; a prosthetic and sensory aids center; a VA police headquarters; a behavioral health center; a center for rehabilitative services; an outpatient optometric center; and four new state-of-the-art replacement CBOCs. The Columbia VA is also renovating Building 10 (20,000 sq./ft) on the campus, which will be the new primary care annex.

**Mental Health/Suicide Prevention:**
CVAHCS provides a wide array of services to veterans and the community. For Veterans, the facility provides general psychotherapy and counseling, as well as specific treatment for substance abuse, PTSD, psychosocial rehabilitation, inpatient services, homeless support, and suicide prevention.

- During COVID-19, Mental Health has implemented several services geared to directly helping veterans:
  - Suicide Prevention and Chaplain Services follow up with veterans who are at elevated risk weekly during COVID-19.
  - Suicide Prevention reaches out to high risk veterans who have had to have a COVID test (whether or not it was positive)
  - The Mental Health Service has dramatically expanded virtual (video and phone) individual and group therapy services, as well as medication management to veterans. The Emergency Department is still always open 24/7.

- Through our Suicide Prevention Team, the facility partners with many community agencies and organizations such as SC State Suicide Prevention Coalition and the SC Army National Guard, to provide education and training, as well as organizational support.
• CVAHCS Suicide Prevention team is part of the joint Department of Veterans Affairs and SAMHSA Governor’s Challenge program. This program is working to develop statewide implementations of best practices in suicide prevention.
  o The CVAHCS Suicide Prevention Team is heading up the workgroup on safety planning and lethal means safety for at risk Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF).

Capital Resource Needs:
• What is needed: When looking at the growth across the state, we are fortunate to have projects in place to meet most of the facility’s needs. However, one area of focus we are concentrating on is the expansion of needed services in the northern part of the state, particularly, ambulatory surgery and diagnostic imaging.
• The facility will be seeking approval to construct a Health Care Center in Spartanburg, S.C. within the next 3-5 years so that it will have the resources to address the needs of veterans in the Upstate without having to travel to Columbia, S.C. for imaging, or outpatient surgery.
From: RLW
Sent: Tue, 14 Jul 2020 19:45:53 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FaceTime Interview w/Jed Boal - KSL TV Salt Lake City
Attachments: Jed Boal - KSL-TV Salt Lake City - July 16 2020-jeh.pptx
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of the Freedom of Information
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TRAVEL PARTY:
The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Brooks Tucker, Acting Chief of Staff
Michael Meador, Special Assistant to the Secretary
Traci Scott, Senior Advisor for Strategic Communications
John Mashburn, Senior Advisor (NC only)

EXECUTIVE PROTECTION:
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Special Agent, Detail Lead
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Special Agent (Adv-Hampton)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Special Agent, (Adv-Butner)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Special Agent, Chase Driver
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Special Agent, Shift Lead
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Special Agent, Limo Driver

EVENT / SITE POCS:
EA to the Director, Hampton VAMC
EA to the Director, Hampton VAMC
John Rogers, Public Affairs Officer, Hampton VAMC
Angela Schulze, Director of Scheduling, Office of Senator Tillis

SCHEDULING POCS:
Albert Guerrero, Special Assistant, OSVA (Adv-Hampton)
Edward “Ted” Diaz, Staff Assistant, OSVA (Adv-Butner)
Travel Coordinator, OSVA

Thursday, July 30, 2020
Weather: Washington, DC H-°; L-° -
Hampton, VA H-°; L-° -

1330-1610 ERT / ARRIVE COURTYARD HAMPTON COLISEUM CENTRAL (2 hr 40 min)
1917 Coliseum Dr, Hampton, VA 23666
Drive time: 2 hr 40 min / 175 miles

RON
Friday, July 31, 2020  
Attire: Business

Weather:  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>H°; L°</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton, VA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butner, NC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0800-0815  **ERT / ARRIVE HAMPTON VA MEDICAL CENTER (15 min)**  
100 Emancipation Dr, Hampton, VA 23667  
Drive Time: 15 min / 4.9 miles  
Greeted By:  
- David C. Collins, Medical Center Director  
- Dr. (b)(6) Chief of Staff

0820-0830  **INTRODUCTION TO COVID-19 ENTRANCE SCREENING AREA (10 min)**  
(Health Questionnaire, Temperature Checks, Masks)

0835-0920  **LEADERSHIP BRIEFING (45 min)**  
Location: Bldg 135 Room A102  
Topics:  
- COVID Responses  
- Access  
- Wait Times  
- Suicide Prevention  
- Tent Operations  
Attendees:  
- The Honorable Robert L. Wilkie, Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
- The Honorable Brooks Tucker, Acting Chief of Staff  
- Mr. Michael Meador, Special Assistant to the Secretary  
- Ms. Traci Scott, Senior Advisor for Strategic Communications  
- Mr. Albert Guerrero, Special Assistant, OSVA  
- Mrs. Deanne Seekins-VISN 6 Network Director  
- David C. Collins-Executive Director, Hampton VAMC  
- Mrs. Lindaman-Associate Director Patient Care Services  
- Dr. (b)(6) Chief of Staff  
- Dr. (b)(6) Associate Director for Operations  
- Dr. (b)(6) Infection Control (Physician)  
- John Rogers-Public Affairs Officer  
Via Skype:  
- Dr. (b)(6) Infection Control  
- Dr. (b)(6) Primary Care  
- Dr. (b)(6) Mental Health  
- (b)(6) Suicide Prevention

Updated by: Ted Diaz  
Mission Operations  
7/27/2020 10:45 AM
0925-0935  COIN RECOGNITION (10 min)
Location: Historical Lobby
Recipients:
- Practitioner/Intermediate Care Center
- Dr. Infection Control (Physician)
- Dr. Infection Control (Physician)
- Wound Care Nurse (Registered Nurse)
- Emergency Management Specialist

0935-0940  EXECUTIVE TIME (5 min)

0940-1025  FACILITY TOUR (45 min)
Tour Led By:
- David C. Collins, Medical Center Director
- Dr. Chief of Staff
Highlighted Areas:
- Prime 1 & 2
- Pharmacy
- Prime 6

1030-1035  MEDIA PREP (5 min)
Location: Bldg110B (Prime 6 Conference Room)

1035-1100  MEDIA AVAILABILITY (25 min)
Location: Historical Lobby
- WVEC-TV (ABC), interview with Mike Gooding

1105-1135  ERT / ARRIVE CHESAPEAKE VA CLINIC (30 min)
1987 S Military Hwy, Chesapeake, VA 23320
Drive Time: 30 min / 24.5 miles
Greeted By:
- Dr.

1140-1210  LEADERSHIP BRIEFING / FACILITY TOUR (30 min)
Tour Led By:
- Nurse Manager Ms.
Highlighted Areas:
- Clinic and expansion (PC, Telehealth, MH Services)

1215-1235  ERT / ARRIVE LUNCH (20 min)

1235-1305  LUNCH (30 min)

1305-1310  ERT / ARRIVE VIRGINIA BEACH VA CLINIC (5 min)
244 Clearfield Ave, Virginia Beach, VA 23462
Drive Time: 5 min / 1.6 miles
Greeted By:
  - Dr(b)(6)

1315-1345  **FACILITY BRIEFING / FACILITY TOUR (30 min)**
Tour Led By:
  - Ms. (b)(6)
Highlighted Areas:
  - Clinic and expansion (PC, Telehealth, MH Services)

1350-1705  **ERT / ERT / ARRIVE EMBASSY SUITES RALEIGH (3 h 15 min)**
4700 Creedmoor Rd., Raleigh, NC 27612
Drive Time: 3 h 15 min / 192 miles

1355-1420  **TELEPHONE INTERVIEW (25 min)**
Location: in vehicle
  - *Virginian-Pilot*, telephone interview with Lisa Vernon Sparks

**RON**

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**Saturday, August 1, 2020**

**Weather:**
Butner, NC  
H.°; L.° -

0915-0950  **ERT / ARRIVE VETERANS LIFE CENTER (20 min)**
1005 9th St, Butner, NC 27509
Drive Time: 35 min / 24.2 miles
Greeted By:

1000–1100  **VETERANS LIFE CENTER RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY (1 hr)**
Run of show: TBD

1100-1115  **PRESS EVENT (15 min)**

1120-1145  **LUNCH / TOUR (25 min)**
Location: Courtyard
*Box Lunches to be provided

1145-1155  **EXECUTIVE TIME (10 min)**
1200-1230  FIRESIDE CHAT WITH SENATOR TILLIS AND SECRETARY WILKIE  
Location: TBD

1235-1620  ERT / ARRIVE RESIDENCE (3 hr 45 min) 
MC
**TOTAL TIME BY LOCATION:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton VAMC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chesapeake VA Clinic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>30 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Beach VA Clinic</td>
<td>40 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Life Center</td>
<td>4 h 30 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MAPS**

**Hampton, VA**

[Map image showing Hampton, VA with times and distances marked]
Hampton, VA - Chesapeake, VA – Virginia Beach, VA

Hampton, VA – Chesapeake, VA – Virginia Beach, VA

50 min
39.3 miles

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY – DO NOT DISTRIBUTE
DRAFT 6

Updated by: Ted Diaz
Mission Operations
7/27/2020 10:45 AM
**Butner, NC – Washington, DC**

![Map of Virginia showing locations](image)

**LOCATION(S)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Drive Time</th>
<th>Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VACO - RON Hotel</td>
<td>2 h 40 min</td>
<td>175 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RON Hotel - Hampton VAMC</td>
<td>15 min</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton VAMC - Chesapeake VA Clinic</td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>24.5 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chesapeake VA Clinic - Lunch</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>12.9 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch - Virginia Beach VA Clinic</td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>1.6 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Beach VA Clinic - Embassy Suites Raleigh</td>
<td>3 h 10 min</td>
<td>192 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Embassy Suites Raleigh – Veterans Life Center</td>
<td>36 min</td>
<td>24.2 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Life Center – Embassy Suites Raleigh</td>
<td>36 min</td>
<td>24.2 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embassy Suites Raleigh - Residence</td>
<td>3 h 45 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOTEL OPTIONS

Hampton, VA
1. Courtyard Hampton Coliseum Central
   1917 Coliseum Dr, Hampton, VA 23666
   (757) 838-3300
2. Embassy Suites Hampton Roads
   1700 Coliseum Dr, Hampton, VA 23666
   (757) 827-8200
3. Hyatt Place Hampton Convention Ctr
   1905 Coliseum Dr, Hampton, VA 23666
   (757) 788-8400

Raleigh, NC
*Distance to Veterans Life Center included
1. Embassy Suites Raleigh
   4700 Creedmoor Rd., Raleigh, NC 27612
   (919) 881-0000
   35 min / 24.2 miles
2. DoubleTree Hotel Raleigh / Crabtree
   4100 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh, NC 27612
   (919) 782-8600
   36 min / 24.9 miles
3. Candlewood Suites — Raleigh / Crabtree
   4433 Lead Mine Rd., Raleigh, NC 27612
   (919) 789-4840
   37 min / 24.7 miles
4. Homewood Suites by Hilton
   5400 Homewood Banks Dr., Raleigh, NC 27612
   (919) 785-1131
   37 min / 24.9 miles
5. Hilton Garden Inn — Raleigh / Crabtree (SECVA stayed here last trip thru Raleigh 12/9/19
   3912 Arrow Dr., Raleigh, NC 27612
   (919) 703-2525
   39 min / 25.2 miles

Updated by: Ted Diaz
Mission Operations
7/27/2020 10:45 AM
LUNCH OPTIONS

31 July 2020

1. Chick-Fil-A
4752 Virginia Beach Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA 23462
(20 mins from Chesapeake VA Clinic; 5 mins from Va Beach Clinic)

2. McDonald's
745 Newtown Rd, Norfolk, VA 23502
(25 mins from Chesapeake VA Clinic)

Flight Options (Raleigh-Durham)
Saturday, Aug 1, 2020

RDU-WAS

1. United Airlines 6130 RDU-IAD 1500-1609 (1 h 9 min)

2. American Airlines 4366 RDU-PHL 1605-1736 (1 h 31 min)
   Layover – Philadelphia International Airport 1736 – 1825 (49 min)
   American Airlines 5294 PHL-BWI 1825 – 1933 (1 h 8 min)

3. Delta Airlines 2622 RDU-ATL 1630-1754 (1 h 24 min)
   Layover – Atlanta International Airport 1754 – 1913 (1 h 19 min)
   Delta Airlines 0760 ATL-BWI 1913 – 2105 (1 h 52 min)

4. American Airlines 1794 RDU-CLT 1801-1911 (1 h 10 min)
   Layover – Philadelphia International Airport 1736 – 1825 (49 min)
   American Airlines 5294 PHL-BWI 1825 – 1933 (1 h 8 min)
MOTORCADE LOAD PLAN
June 30 – Aug 1, 2020

ALL MOVEMENTS:

LIMO: CHASE:

Updated by: Ted Diaz
Mission Operations
7/27/2020 10:45 AM
From: EOP/OVP
Sent: Tue, 14 Jul 2020 19:06:37 +0000
To: EOP/OVP @HHS.GOV
Cc: EOP/NSC

Subject: [EXTERNAL] White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting
Attachments: 

All –

There will be a White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting on Wednesday, July 15th at 1:30pm in the White House Materials attached.

Thank you,
Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
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Page 6 of 6

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of the Freedom of Information
Phone Call w/FL Gov DeSantis - he will call us on (b)(6)
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of the Freedom of Information
EXECUTIVE BRIEFING SUMMARY
Senator Scott (FL)
Thursday July 16, 2020
Call

July 16, 2020 Time TBD
OCLA POC: [b](6)
Driver: Sen. Scott’s request
Subject: COVID-19 Response
Participants: Senator Scott VA: SECVA

PURPOSE OF EVENT/MEETING:

☐ Decisional  ☐ Informational  ☐ Pre-Event
☐ Remarks  ☒ Other  ☐ Courtesy Call

OVERVIEW OF EVENT:
Teleconference with Senator Scott to discuss the Department’s response to COVID-19 and 4th mission response.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING TALKING POINTS:

- VA has contingency plans in place to address the needs of the Veteran enrollee population and has been activating our 4th mission as the civilian health care system needed assistance. VA has been modeling the COVID-19 spread in across the nation in order to prepare for outbreaks and to reinforce areas where the civilian health care system is stressed.

- Mitigation strategies include the following actions: postponing non-urgent and routine health care appointments, screening all visitors to VA facilities for symptoms, restricting admissions and visitation, converting acute care beds to intensive care unit beds (ICU) and cross-leveling supplies and workforce across regions. The activated VHA Emergency Management Coordination Cell (EMCC) is the liaison between the national and network levels of the response.
  - VA has begun modeling the COVID-19 spread in several different cities and states in order to prepare for outbreaks and to reinforce markets where the civilian health care system appears stressed.
  - VA continues to monitor the status of supplies and equipment daily.

- The Health Eligibility Center (HEC) remains fully operational and prepared for an increase of workload related to increases in enrollment. Most applications are adjudicated within a few days. When a Veteran presents for care, VA will immediately begin the process of enrollment. If a patient is found not to be eligible for VA healthcare, VA will treat that patient under the humanitarian mission.
• VA developed an enterprise-wide plan that leverages capacity and optimizes the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) workforce for COVID-19 related surges in care with staff and supplies in Intensive Care Units (ICU), Emergency Departments (ED) and inpatient wards.

• In anticipation of the projected COVID-19 surge patterns, facilities are required to take immediate action to repurpose certain staff with acute care capabilities to leverage capacity and optimize the workforce to care for our Veterans. Staff will be expected to initially assist within their own respective VISNs with the potential for enterprise-wide expansion as needed as the COVID-19 pandemic requires. Facilities must plan to augment ICU, ED and inpatient hospital staff through deployment of direct care personnel as well as those who may assist by telehealth modalities. Our collective occupancy rate is 56%.

FOURTH MISSION TALKING POINTS:
• FEMA is the lead federal agency directing the federal response to COVID-19. When a State, Tribe, or Territory has determined that the maximum capacity of intrastate or interstate resources are exhausted, they may request assistance from the federal government through their local HHS Regional Emergency Coordinator (REC). VA cannot receive direct requests for assistance from state and local governments.

• FEMA can request that VA provide resources to civilian health care systems or that VA hospital care and medical services be provided to non-Veteran patients in VA facilities, dependent upon the availability of resources and funding, and consistent with the VA mission to provide priority services to Veterans.

• VA currently has 29 ongoing mission assignments. We have provided care to a total of 46 states and territories thus far.

• VA is caring for approximately 420 non-Veterans in our facilities, referred to internally as “humanitarian admissions.”

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TALKING POINTS:
• We have plans in place to protect and provide a safe environment for everyone who gets care, visits or works at one of our facilities. Veterans are being told to call their VA medical center before going to a clinic, urgent care center, or emergency room if they have symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath. VA offers comprehensive COVID-19 screening and treatment services.

• One issue we have noticed is that Veterans, employees and the public are not aware of or misinterpreting the guidelines for appropriate PPE use. VHA staff have been instructed to adhere to the PPE requirements outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and follow Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions.
• Please note: Not all VA personnel who work in a VA facility will come into contact with a COVID-19 infected patient. There is specific CDC guidance for when to use a facemask/face covering vs an N95 respirator given the demand on the supply chain. VA will continue to follow CDC guidance and prioritize PPE based on high risk activity.

TESTING TALKING POINTS:
• VA offers comprehensive COVID-19 screening and treatment services. VA health care facilities have been testing Veterans who meet the testing criteria provided by the CDC. We are taking samples on-site and having external labs process our tests. In some locations, VA can perform tests in our own labs.

• VHA has a plan for testing employees. VHA employees who experience an unprotected exposure (e.g., no mask, eye protection) to a COVID-19 positive Veteran are offered testing for COVID-19, based on risk. Employees may choose to have testing performed at VA or at their personal healthcare provider. Employees who develop COVID-19 associated symptoms while at work are offered testing as well.

• VA is working hard to increase our supply of testing materials, including swabs, reagents, transport media, and other items, to be able to offer any employee or Veteran who would like a test the opportunity to schedule one to determine if they are positive at the time of the test. Some facilities are able to offer this capability, while others are not, given the worldwide shortage of such materials. At this time, every facility can provide a test to those who need one due to an exposure or who is showing symptoms. VA is also working towards offering a serologic, or antibody, test, which would confirm whether an employee or Veteran has been exposed in the past.

• VA completed testing all patients and employees in our Community Living Centers and Spinal Cord Injury Units to protect our most vulnerable populations.

• VA is sourcing machines, reagents and software from a variety of sources.

• VA currently has 8 facilities providing high through-put testing to other VA facilities, rapid testing available at 141 medical centers and can access additional testing through commercial laboratories. Turnaround times for the high through-put systems is currently 48 hours while testing at commercial laboratories may take up to 5 days

• We have received results on over 376,000 tests.

• Testing is based on many factors, including the severity of symptoms, other existing illnesses or conditions, possible exposure, and other criteria.
INCREASING CAPACITY TALKING POINTS:

- VA has taken the following steps to conserve resources and reduce non-COVID health care demand in the event surge capabilities are needed:
  
  - With best medical interest of Veterans and risk reduction from COVID-19 paramount, VHA facilities ceased non-urgent elective procedures by Wednesday, March 18, 2020. This action will reduce unnecessary hospitalizations and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) utilization and will free up resources to address COVID-19, if needed. VA is reviewing elective procedures with active clinical review and management to ensure Veterans continue to receive the appropriate, high-quality care.
  
  - VA is taking steps to shift appropriate, routine care to telephone and other virtual modalities (telehealth) and/or postponing appointments based upon results of health screenings and Veteran requests to minimize exposure to COVID-19 at health care sites. Non-essential use of the VA network is being minimized to support increased telehealth capabilities.
  
  - We are now conducting over 30,000 video telehealth sessions per day, an increase of over 1,000%
  
  - VA will continually assess how these mitigation measures are affecting access to care at local facilities and communities and may update or adjust this guidance in the next 30 days

- VA has expanded bed capacity by approximately 2,000 ICU and Medical/Surgical beds across the system. The number of Med Surge and ICU beds available for the treatment of COVID related patients has increased by 53% since March.

SUPPLY CHAIN TALKING POINTS:

- VA is equipped with essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies and continues to monitor the status of those items daily. The status of these items changes hourly. VHA is a national healthcare system that is constantly rebalancing our capacity based on need. One issue we have noticed is that Veterans, employees and the public are not aware of or misinterpreting the guidelines for appropriate PPE use. VHA staff have been instructed to adhere to the PPE requirements outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and follow Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions. VA will continue to follow CDC guidance and prioritize PPE based on high risk activity.

- VA will be issuing further guidance with more granularity about when which type of PPE is required, and by whom. That said, experts are nearly unanimous in indicating that not everyone in a hospital needs an N95 mask. A face covering is sufficient for those not in direct contact with a COVID-19 patient, and is currently mandatory for all patients, visitors, and staff in every VA healthcare facility.
• Our supply chain is currently forecasting sufficient PPE, at the burn rate we are currently sustaining, for the next few months. Obviously, much of that could change as the global supply chain continues to respond to increased demand from all corners.
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Ticket No. A101379FY20

VHA’s FY 2022 Budget Briefing
When: July 29: 9:30am-10am
VHA: Dr. Richard Stone (EIC)
Steven Lieberman (PDUSH)
Carolyn Clancy (DUSH)
Jon Jensen (COS)
Laura Duke (CFO)
Rachel Mitchell (DCFO)
(b)(6) (EA)
(b)(6) (Staff Assistant)
(b)(6) (Budget Analyst)
(b)(6) (Associate CFO)
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Good evening,

There will be a **White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting** at 10:00am in the White House. All materials will be forthcoming.

Thank you,
Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
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of the Freedom of Information
Withheld pursuant to exemption (b)(5) of the Freedom of Information
Ticket No. A101378FY20

OIT’s and EHRM’s FY 2022 Budget Briefing
When: July 29, 9am-9:30am

OIT: James Gfrerer (CIO)
    Susan Perez (COS)
    John Oswalt (DCIO)
    [b](5) [CFO]
    [b](5) [Program Analyst]

EHRM: John Windom (ED)
      Eddie Riley (COS)
      [b](5) [CFO]
      Dr. Laura Kroupa (CMO)
      John Short
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Senator Reed’s staffer called me to confirm the purpose of the call, I said that I expected this to be a courtesy call to endorse Director Connell as the new VAMC director at Providence (since Larry just left HQ as the VHA COS). He confirmed that he did not expect the Senator to bring up anything new; mentioned that COVID response and PPE is always a question.
EXECUTIVE BRIEFING SUMMARY
Senator Jack Reed (D-RI)
Thursday, July 9, 2020, 1:00-1:30PM
Conference Call:
202-228-0808 code: 832594 #

OCLA POC: Cathy Haverstock
Participants: Senator Reed VA: SECVA
Driver: Secretary requested a call w/ Senator prior to his visit to Providence VAMC on Monday, July 13.
Subject: Personal/Courtesy Call

PURPOSE OF EVENT/MEETING:

☐ Decisional ☐ Informational ☐ Pre-Event
☐ Remarks ☐ Other X Courtesy Call

OVERVIEW OF EVENT:
The Senator is scheduled to visit the Providence VAMC on Monday, July 13 to meet with the new Director, Larry Connell (former VHA COS). Connell was appointed as Director last month (June 2020). Secretary requested a call in advance of the visit.

PHONE ATTENDEES:
- Cathy Haverstock will be on the call.
- No additional participants expected; if the Senator's staff joins the call, his name is

BACKGROUND:
- The Secretary is long acquainted with the Senator. They last spoke on May 8 at Senator Reed's request to discuss the COVID-19 response in Rhode Island.
- COVID-19 Support to Rhode Island:
  - Deployed 18 nurses to assist with testing of State Veterans Home residents; and accepted several patients in transfer from the SVH to the Providence VAMC. Mission Assignment for ongoing support to SVH with testing and/or transfer of patients to VA.
  - Provided PPE including 330 gowns and testing kits.
- Director Connell's Bio: Lawrence B. Connell was appointed Director of the VA Providence Healthcare System in June, 2020. Previously, he served as the VHA Chief of Staff from July 23, 2018.
Also served as the Acting Medical Center Director of the Washington, DC VA Medical Center and is a retired U.S. Army colonel, where he served as the Deputy Chief of Operations, Joint Cyber Center, United States Pacific Command.

Served more than 30 years as an Army medical service officer, including 15 years as a medical evacuation helicopter pilot.

Additionally, Mr. Connell served as the Chief Operating Officer, Pacific Regional Medical Command, Honolulu, Hawaii; the Chief Executive Officer of Stuttgart U.S. Army Medical Health Clinic; the Commander of the 43rd Area Support Medical Battalion; and other medical-related staff positions.

His military awards include the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster award and two Air Medals. He is a certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and a graduate of the Disney Institute for Health Care Excellence.

Mr. Connell holds a Bachelor of Science in Communications from the University of Rhode Island and a master’s degree in International Relations from Troy State University.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Congressional Bio
2. April 14 letter from Senator + Current draft response (not final)
Senator Jack Reed (D-R.I.)

Senior Senator

Residence: Jamestown;  
Born: November 12, 1949; Providence, R.I.  
Religion: Roman Catholic; Family: Wife, Julia Reed, one child  
First Elected: 1996 (4th term); Up for re-election in 2020  
Last Elected: 2014 (70.58%)  

Committee and Subcommittee Assignments

- Appropriations (5th of 15 Democrats)
  - Military Construction-VA  
  - Defense  
  - Commerce, Justice and Science  
  - Interior, Environment  
  - Labor, Health, Human Services, Education  
  - Transportation, HUD

- Armed Services-Ranking Member

- Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs (2nd of 12 Democrats)
  - Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection  
  - Housing, Transportation, and Community Development  
  - Securities, Insurance and Investment

Leadership Positions and Party Committee Assignments

- No reported leadership or party committee positions

Selected Caucus and Special Organization Memberships

- Senate National Guard Caucus

Background

- A former Army Ranger and company commander, Senator Reed knows what it means to serve, and understands the dedication of so many men and women who make great sacrifices to defend our nation in uniform.
- Over the course of his military career he earned the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Ranger Tab, Senior Parachutist Badge, and Expert Infantry Badge.
- Senator Reed believes it is imperative to fix the VA health care system for veterans to have access to the quality services they have earned and deserve.
- To enhance legal and financial protections for members of the military under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), Senator Reed introduced the Servicemember Housing Protection Act and the SCRA Rights Protection Act.
VA Issues

VHA Issues
- **TBI & PTSD** - He helped pass the largest veterans budget in history, which significantly improved resources to process disability claims and treat Traumatic Brain Injury and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder for those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.
- **Disability Claims** - In an effort to help reduce the backlog of veterans' disability claims, and deliver benefits to veterans more quickly and efficiently, Reed worked with the VA to make Providence the first Regional VA office in the nation to install a new Veterans Benefit Management System (VBMS).
- **Claims Backlog** - Senator Reed supported the Appropriations Committee's 10-point plan to provide additional resources and accountability to the VA to improve claims processing. This included an additional $294 million for claims operations in the 2014 budget.
- **VA Medical Programs** - Reed helped enact the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, which requires a two-year budget for VA medical programs, ensuring better care for our nations' veterans.
- **Homelessness** - April 2018 promoted the $150k in HUD-VASH vouchers awarded to organizations in his state.
- **Suicide Prevention** - Senator Reed is interested in the VA's budget for suicide prevention and mental health outreach and urging the VA to consult with public and mental health outreach experts on how to better track the VA’s performance.

VBA Issues
- **Post 9/11 G.I. Bill** - Reed helped pass the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, providing better tuition benefits to veterans and their families for college and job training after their service.
- **Veteran Housing** - Senator Reed introduced the HAVEN Act, which authorizes a competitive, five-year, $20 million pilot program to help make home repairs and improvements for disabled or low-income Veterans.

NCA Issues
- None

VA-Related Legislation (Sponsored)

116th Congress:

**S.2049**: A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to automatically discharge the loans of certain veteran borrowers, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 06/28/2019: Referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.
The Honorable Robert Wilkie  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

I write again to express my concern related to the status of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) preparations to ensure the safety of our nation’s veterans, their families, and the dedicated VA employees who serve them. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has taken, and continues to take, a devastating toll on our nation, its veterans, and those on the frontlines responding to this crisis.

According to data from the VA’s website, as of April 13, there are 4,097 veteran patients who have tested positive for COVID-19, including one inpatient veteran at the Providence VA Medical Center (VAMC), six outpatient veterans, and 241 deaths nationwide of veteran patients. Similarly, according to recent reports, more than 1,200 VA staff have tested positive for COVID-19 and at least nine have died.

As such, I am particularly concerned by reports that there is insufficient supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the dedicated staff and employees who care for our veterans. As recently reported by the Wall Street Journal, “[m]ask supply levels in VHA do not support providing masks to all other employees not working directly with Covid-19 infected [v]eterans,” which undoubtedly raises the risk of infection for VA staff and the veterans they provide care for.

Further, several media outlets have cited internal VA documents directing VA staff to reuse PPE due to shortages. Similarly, it has been reported that staff is spread thin and, in particular, that the shortages of PPE have meant that some staff feel unsafe performing their tasks. I note the VA’s previous public assertion that there are sufficient quantities of PPE.

As such, please provide a prompt response to the following questions regarding the status of VA’s preparedness, current levels of supplies, and what additional resources the VA may require to combat COVID-19, no later than April 28, 2020.

1. As of April 14, does the VA have sufficient PPE, sanitizer, and medical equipment in every facility?
a. In particular, does the Providence VAMC have sufficient PPE, sanitizer, and medical equipment? I note the report issued by the Office of Inspector General, released on March 26, which indicates an inadequate supply of sanitizer at the Providence VAMC.

b. If there are continued shortages, in particular at the Providence VAMC, what steps has the VA taken to remedy this situation?

2. Have shortages of PPE, sanitizers, or other medical equipment compromised care for veterans or put VA employees at risk of infection?

3. As of April 14, has the VA provided PPE to State Veterans Homes as authorized in the recently enacted CARES Act?

   a. Has any PPE been provided to the Rhode Island Veterans Home in Bristol, Rhode Island?

   b. If no PPE has been provided to the Rhode Island Veterans Home, are there plans to provide such materials?

4. What discussions has the VA had with federal employee unions and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) with regard to the adequacy of supplies of PPE, sanitizer, and other medical materials at VA facilities?

5. Is there appropriate staffing levels at the Providence VAMC, and are staff being asked to perform duties that require PPE without having received it?

   a. Are there any plans to provide assistance to the staff at the Rhode Island Veterans Home?

6. As of April 14, has the VA provided any PPE to home health workers who provide care to veterans?

   a. If not, does the VA have plans to provide PPE to home health workers as directed in the CARES Act?

7. What impact has VA’s mobilization under its “fourth mission” had on the levels of PPE, sanitizer, and other medical supplies across the VA system?

8. What additional resources does the VA require to combat COVID-19, care for our nation’s veterans, and protect VA staff?
Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Again, I stand ready to work with you to help protect our veterans and those who provide care for them.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed
United States Senator
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Responses to Senator Jack Reed Regarding VA Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Question 1: As of April 14, does the VA have sufficient PPE, sanitizer, and medical equipment in every facility?

VA RESPONSE: Yes. VA has adequate amounts of personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitizer and medical equipment in every facility. VA monitors the status of PPE and supplies daily. Supplies and equipment are sent to facilities based on an analysis of inventory; demand of COVID-19 care; and predictive modeling of potential surge indicators.

a. In particular, does the Providence VAMC have sufficient PPE, sanitizer, and medical equipment? I note the report issued by the Office of Inspector General, released on March 26, which indicates an inadequate supply of sanitizer at the Providence VAMC.

b. If there are continued shortages, in particular at the Providence VAMC, what steps has the VA taken to remedy this situation?

Question 2: Have shortages of PPE, sanitizers, or other medical equipment compromised care for veterans or put VA employees at risk of infection?

(b)(5)

Question 3: As of April 14, has the VA provided PPE to State Veterans Homes as authorized in the recently enacted CARES Act?
b. If no PPE has been provided to the Rhode Island Veterans Home, are there plans to provide such materials?

**VA RESPONSE:** As stated above, VA provided 330 gowns to the Rhode Island SVHs. Also, VA leadership carefully monitors several data points and models daily that could indicate a potential surge of COVID-19 patients. At this point in time, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is in constant contact with our Federal partners to prepare and mitigate for an increase in COVID-19 patients. VA stands ready to support the civilian health care system if needed. The VHA Geriatrics and Extended Care Program Office has been working closely with SVHs and will continue to share relevant guidance.

4. What discussions has the VA had with federal employee unions and Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) with regard to the adequacy of supplies of PPE, sanitizer, and other medical materials at VA facilities?

**VA RESPONSE:** VA held a VSO communicators briefing on March 19, 2020 and continues to provide updates and information as requested. We value our VSO partnership in sharing social media messaging related to VA COVID-19 resources and directing Veterans to our national response activities and frequently asked questions at [https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus](https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus). VA has provided employee unions with regular updates.
5. Is there appropriate staffing levels at the Providence VAMC, and are staff being asked to perform duties that require PPE without having received it?

VA RESPONSE: Yes, there are adequate staffing levels at the Providence VAMC. Staff are not asked to perform duties that require PPE without receiving it. VA is monitoring the supply levels at every facility every day to make sure we have adequate PPE for the number and types of patients that we are seeing. Each facility and unit consume PPE and other supplies at different rates, as is always the case in health care, based on the number and acuity of patients.

a. Are there any plans to provide assistance to the staff at the Rhode Island Veterans Home?

VA RESPONSE: VHA is supporting a State of Rhode Island request to provide VHA health care personnel to support SVH patients.

6. As of April 14, has the VA provided any PPE to home health workers who provide care to veterans?

VA RESPONSE: VA is still conducting home based primary care. In-person home visits are being limited to only those deemed essential. New admission assessments may be considered essential. Whenever feasible, visits are being performed virtually through VA Video Connect, video on demand or by telephone. If an in-person visit is deemed

a. If not, does the VA have plans to provide PPE to home health workers as directed in the CARES Act?

VA RESPONSE: Home health workers are equipped with appropriate PPE for in-person visits.

7. What impact has VA’s mobilization under its “fourth mission” had on the levels of PPE, sanitizer, and other medical supplies across the VA system?

VA RESPONSE: VA is monitoring the supply levels at every facility every day to make sure we have adequate PPE for the number and types of patients that we are seeing and any supplies and equipment that may be needed under the fourth mission. The current/emergency appropriation covers the expansion of services including VA’s mobilization under the fourth mission.
8. What additional resources does the VA require to combat COVID-19, care for our nation’s veterans, and protect VA staff?

(b)(5)

Department of Veterans Affairs
June 2020
Ticket No. A101378FY20

VBA’s and BVA’s FY 2022 Budget Briefing
When: July 27, 3pm-3:30pm
VBA: Paul R. Lawrence, Ph.D. (USB)
       Margarita Devlin (DPUSB)
       Andrea Lee (COS)
       Charles Tapp (CFO)
       [b][6] [E] [A]

BVA: Cheryl Mason (Chairperson)
     [b][6] [C] [O] [S]
     [b][6] [S] [E] [N] [I] [R] [A] [D] [I] [V] [O] [R]
     [b][6] [C] [F] [O]
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of the Freedom of Information
From: RLW
Sent: Wed, 29 Jul 2020 19:08:16 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Phone Call w/Sen. Gardner - he will call us
Attachments: Sen. Gardner, Cory (R-CO).docx
Sen. Cory Gardner (R—Colo.)
Junior Senator

For internal use only — Draft/pre-decisional

Residence: Yuma
Born: Aug. 22, 1974; Yuma, Colo.
Religion: Lutheran - Missouri Synod
Family: Wife, Jaime Gardner; three children
Education: Colorado State U., B.A. 1997 (political science); U. of Colorado, J.D. 2001
Military Service: None
Career: Lawyer; congressional aide; agricultural advocacy organization spokesman; farm equipment parts dealer

First Elected: 2014 (1st term)
Last Elected: 2014 (48.21%)

Committee and Subcommittee Assignments
- Commerce, Science and Transportation (8th of 14 Republicans)
  - Aviation and Space
  - Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet
  - Science, Oceans, Fisheries, and Water – Chair
  - Transportation and Safety
- Energy and Natural Resources (7th of 11 Republicans)
  - Energy
  - National Parks
  - Public Lands, Forests, and Mining
  - Water and Power
- Foreign Relations (4th of 12 Republicans)
  - East Asia, The Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy - Chair
  - Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism
  - Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights and Global Women's Issues

Leadership Positions and Party Committee Assignments
- Deputy Whip

Selected Caucus and Special Organization Memberships
- Congressional Multiple Sclerosis Caucus
- Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus

Interests
- Former Congressional district (4th) was near the new Denver Replacement Facility.
• An antiques buff, he lives in the home his great-grandparents owned and is working to restore it to the way it looked in the early 1900s.
• Has backed protecting the state’s legalization of marijuana

VA Issues

VHA Issues
• COVID-19 queries re:
  o Connected Care – inquired about the VA’s potential use of VA Health Chat, a product of CirrusMD
  o 3/16/20 ltr to SECVA re: coronavirus response, including VA’s protocol on safety procedures for employees/Veterans, containment and tracing strategies, and PPE supply and usage; telehealth in lieu of in-person appointments; coordination with third-party administrators for community care referrals; VSO outreach efforts to Veterans on the pandemic resources; and VA’s collaboration with state and federal partners on COVID testing (VIEWS #2571184)
  o Specific concerns re: telework, social distancing and other COVID precautions and protocols at the VA’s Office of Community Care in Denver due to constituent complaints

VBA Issues
• None

NCA Issues
• None

VA-Related Legislation (Sponsored)

116th Congress:
• S.2661 - National Suicide Hotline Designation Act: A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to designate 9-8-8 as the universal telephone number for the purpose of the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system operating through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and through the Veterans Crisis Line, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 5/14/20: Received in the House and held at the desk.

• S.341 - Department of Veterans Affairs Procurement Efficiency and Transparency Act of 2019: To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the procurement practices of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 2/5/19: Referred to SVAC.

• S.450 - Veterans Improved Access and Care Act of 2019: To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to expedite the
onboarding process for new medical providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to reduce the duration of the hiring process for such medical providers, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 2/5/2020: Reported to the Senate with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and without a written report by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar.

- **S.221 - Department of Veterans Affairs Provider Accountability Act**: To amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Under Secretary of Health to report major adverse personnel actions involving certain health care employees to the National Practitioner Data Bank and to applicable State licensing boards, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 12/23/19: Received in the House and referred to HVAC.

- **S.91 - Creating a Reliable Environment for Veterans' Dependents Act of 2019**: To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize per diem payments under comprehensive service programs for homeless veterans to furnish care to dependents of homeless veterans, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 1/10/19: Referred to SVAC.

- **S.1998 - Veterans Small Business Ownership Improvements Act**: To improve the programs for veterans of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 6/26/19: Read twice and referred to: Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

**115th Congress:**

- **S.5**: A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay individuals who are owed educational assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance program the amounts of educational assistance that they are entitled to by law, and for other purposes. Latest Action: 12/4/18: Referred to SVAC.

- **S.2168: Veterans Improved Access and Care Act**: Amends the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to include in the Veterans Choice Program all veterans enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Introduces a pilot program to expedite the onboarding process of new medical providers. Requires VA Secretary to submit a strategy to Congress to reduce the duration of the hiring process of licensed professional medical providers. Also amends Section 7461 of Title 38 of US Code, by improving accountability within VHA by requiring reporting of major adverse actions taken to national practitioner data bank and State licensing boards. Latest Action: 12/14/17: Companion measure, HR 4642, introduced by Rep. Scott Tipton (R-Colo.).
From: RLW
To: RLW
Subject: FY22 Budget Briefing - OM Overview
Attachments: OM FY 2022- Internal Budget Briefing for SecVa, as of 7-24-20 5pm.pdf

Ticket No. A101378FY20
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All –

There will be a **White House Coronavirus Meeting** at 11:00am on **Friday, July 10th** at the **White House**. For those unable to join in-person, will be a secure call-in option.

Preliminary materials attached.
Thank you,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
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of the Freedom of Information
Hello, I’m Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie, and I’m honored to join you for your 2020 “DAV & Auxiliary Virtual Salute” as you prepare to celebrate your centennial anniversary.

What an accomplishment!

100 years of empowering Veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity, ensuring they have the full range of benefits available to them, fighting for their interests with Congress, and educating all Americans about the sacrifices and needs of Veterans.

The fact that you are meeting virtually is a reminder that this has been a challenging year for DAV, for Veterans, and for our Nation. But there is much good news to share.

Last year, Congress approved a $220 billion budget for VA.
This is not the VA you read about in 2014. Today’s VA is rededicated to the task President Lincoln assigned us 155 years ago, “to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan.”

Our record tells the story of VA’s turnaround as we’ve implemented major reforms.

Under the MISSION Act, we gave Veterans real, permanent choice, completing more than 59.9 million internal episodes of care in the last fiscal year, a record high, and 1.7 million more than the year before.

We implemented critical updates to the GI Bill under the Harry W. Colmery Act and took on the task of caring for thousands of Blue Water Navy Veterans.

And we continue to make progress on the difficult initiative of conforming our electronic health care records to those in the Defense Department.

We push on with these reforms even as we simultaneously cope with the significant challenges posed by a global pandemic.
Though COVID-19 was a shock to health care systems around the world, your VA responded quickly to mitigate the impact. We took steps that allowed us to keep serving Veterans, including implementation of emergency management procedures, expanding telehealth access, and prohibiting visitors to VA nursing homes and spinal cord injury centers.

Here’s where we stand: As of late July, VA had tested more than 420,000 patients for COVID-19, and over 340,000 of those tests were returned negative.

More than 29,000 Veterans nationwide were diagnosed with the virus. But 75 percent of those Veterans are 14 days past their last positive test and recovering at home.

We are caring for about 5,200 Veterans with the virus. We have about 2,000 positive COVID tests among VA employees, but our infection rate among staff is less than one percent—incredibly low compared to other health care systems.
We’ve hired more than 30,000 new employees since late March, including over 5,200 registered nurses.

I’m also proud to report that we have a very low incidence of COVID infection in our Community Living Centers, even though many non-VA nursing homes and Veterans homes became hotspots.

This stability has allowed us to fully engage in our “Fourth Mission,” which is to support the national health care system in times of stress.

We’ve accepted 69 missions from FEMA, 32 of which are ongoing, in 46 states and territories.

By April, we were accepting requests to open dozens of our beds to non-Veteran patients in New York and New Jersey.

We’ve deployed 854 employees on various missions, including 294 to community nursing homes across the nation and 330 to state Veterans homes.

This crisis has taken a toll. It claimed the lives of more than 1,800 Veterans and 40 VA staff members.
Even during this unprecedented event, VA’s standing among Veterans continued to improve. Despite the challenges, recent survey results show that a record high 90 percent of Veterans trust VA care.

This is great news. It shows that VA can be trusted to turn a budget increase into real results for Veterans and build trust for future budget debates.

I’d like to close by thanking you for your important work on behalf of Veterans and their families.

You established a COVID-19 Relief Fund to provide help to unemployed service-connected disabled Veterans. So far, more than 6,000 have received over 1.5 million dollars in relief. Your benefits specialists are still working claims, and you’re hosting virtual career fairs for Veterans, transitioning military members, and spouses.

And you have continued with your other critical work—annually, DAV provides more than 600,000 rides to Veterans attending medical appointments and assists with over 200,000 benefit claims. In 2019, you helped
Veterans receive more than $21 billion in earned benefits. Your 1,300 chapters and more than 1 million members across the country help provide our nation’s heroes and their families the resources they need and ensure we keep promises made to them.

In closing, I’d like to offer you best wishes for your next 100 years of helping Veterans, and congratulate your National Commander, Stephen “Butch” Whitehead, National Adjutant Marc Burgess, Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy Reese and Executive Director Barry Jesinoski for jobs well done. Thanks for your leadership and your many contributions to the well-being of our Nation’s Veterans.

May God bless all our Veterans, those currently serving, and may He continue to bless our Great Nation. Thank you.

# # #
Hello, I’m Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie.

I’m glad to be with you for the Blinded Veterans Association’s 75th Anniversary and virtual conference.

This year’s conference is different from any we have experienced, but the work you’re doing will ensure BVA remains a champion for America’s blind and visually impaired Veterans and Active duty servicemembers.

... 

In 1944 while America’s Veterans were defeating fascism and Nazism in World War II, President
Roosevelt made a strong commitment to our nation’s Veterans and Servicemembers.

He declared, “No blinded servicemen . . . would be returned to their homes without adequate training to meet the problems . . . imposed upon them by their blindness.”

Soon after, VA’s first Blind Rehabilitation Center opened its doors in Hines, Illinois.

Today, VA is providing lifetime care coordination to over 41,000 blinded and visually impaired Veterans—helping them develop skills they need for independence and successful reintegration into community and homelife.

Last year, our Optometry Services provided eye and vision care to nearly one and a half million Veterans.
Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Services provided millions of eyeglasses, closed circuit televisions, smart technology devices, and other optical aids.

Our adaptive sports programs are giving visually impaired Veterans the chance to re-engage in leisure, health, and wellness activities.

We’re even helping blind and low-vision Veterans train for Paralympic sports and compete with the national Olympic Team.

And our Vision Center of Excellence—in partnership with the Department of Defense—continues to produce world-class treatment options for challenges like visual problems caused by Traumatic Brain Injury.
All of this great work represents life-changing opportunities for our blind and visually impaired Veterans.

... 

The COVID pandemic has presented new challenges for the nation and VA.

But it’s an even greater challenge for blind or visually impaired Veterans, especially those with limited transportation options and caregiver support.

In response to the pandemic, our Blind Rehabilitation Specialists launched a nationwide initiative, conducting over 90,000 wellness checks with visually impaired Veterans.

And in spite of the pandemic, we continue providing access to vision rehabilitation through
VA Video Connect, Skype, Face Time, Facebook Messenger video chat, among other platforms.

And thanks to BVA’s advocacy, the Kules [COOLS] and Benne [BEN] Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019 is ready for President Trump’s signature.

This Act will give blind Veterans expanded access to Specially Adapted Housing benefits that support their needs and maximize independence.

It will provide more funding for eligible Veterans to adapt their homes to specific needs.

And in an important change, under the new law visually impaired Veterans without lower extremity disabilities can qualify for these benefits.
So we’re staying connected while keeping on the cutting edge of blind services and rehabilitation.

As one blind Veteran said, “There are no stop signs in life, only speed bumps.”

... 

Working together the last 75 years, we have helped millions of blind and low-vision Veterans achieve greater and greater independence.

With your help, we are living up to Roosevelt’s promise.

... 

I’ll leave you with a note from history that I think defines everything we do at VA.

The night before the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions launched the liberation of Europe on
June 6, 1944, Gen. Ridgway relied on a promise God made to Joshua—"I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

And that is VA’s commitment to our blind and visually impaired Veterans and servicemembers today.

We will not fail you.

We will not forsake you.

And we thank you for your devoted service and your example of courage and determination that inspires us all.

God bless you and your families and this great country of ours.

# # #
Ticket No. A101376FY20
SecVA’s Weekly Brief to VSOs for VAs COVID-19 Response

Agenda

Monday, July 20, 2020
10:00am to 11:00am (EDT)

Background: A continuation of the bi-weekly briefings to VSOs regarding the VAs response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

List of WH & VA Participants:
1. White House: Alex Flemister, White House
2. VA: Ms. Powers, Mr. Tucker, Dr. Lawrence, Dr. MacDonald, Mr. Reeves, Ms. Mason, Mr. Hutton, Mr. Syrek, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Sitterly, Dr. Davis, and others.

VSO Participants: 165 invitations emailed to VSOs for this meeting.

Talking Points: See VSO Questions, starting on page 2.

The Call: 9:50pm: Participants are invited to begin dialing in to the call.

- Call Instructions: Listed below are the codes and instructions: Please remember all speakers (minus the Secretary and the VSO Liaison) will be in participant mode.
  - Dial in number: 877-446-3914
  - Participant code: (b)(6) 
  - The participants will hear music until the Moderator joins.
  - Participants will unmute by using the unmute code *6
  - The Moderator will mute and Unmute participants throughout the call.

- 10:00am: VSO Liaison initiates phone call and introduces the Secretary, who then gives greetings and opening comments on general points
- Secretary invites VSO Liaison to ask questions. VSO Liaison will call on the VSOs to ask the selected questions. The Secretary or other leaders discuss as appropriate.
- VSO Liaison repeats for additional questions until complete (with deference to the Secretary's time)
- Secretary closes comments, passes back to VSO Liaison who closes the call.
VSO Questions for 7/20:

1. [b](6) (United Spinal Association): As long-standing advocates for veterans, and in particular, veterans with spinal cord injuries/disorders, we thank you for your attention to protecting this most vulnerable population. Could you please address the availability and limitations regarding personal protective equipment for patients and staff at VA Medical Centers across the country?

**RESPONSE:** VHA follows CDC guidance on identifying personnel who are at high risk for exposure to COVID-19 and the CDC PPE protocol. VA is adequately equipped with essential PPE and supplies and monitors the status of those items daily. VA has begun shipping bulk supplies to facilities with requests or cross-leveling supplies within VISNs as needed.

2. Several inquiries by VSOs result in this two-part question for Chairman Mason: Chairman, we understand that public contact hearings have been automatically postponed and virtual tele-hearings have been the only option to conduct hearing with the Board. Could you please tell us how many cases have been postponed? Secondly what is the timeline to move through the postponements and get back to “normal” scheduling of docket dates?

**RESPONSE:**

1. Public contact hearings (Travel Board, Central Office, and Video hearings) were not automatically postponed. Our Coordinators reached out to contact each Vet and representative on each of these dockets and solicit their desire to (a) convert their hearing to a Virtual format, (b) postpone their hearing, or (c) withdraw their hearing request. For those Vets who can’t be contacted, the Coordinator will postpone the Veteran in Caseflow. These contacts and phone calls usually occur 5-10 business days prior to the scheduled hearing.

2. Most of the last 2 quarters of FY 2020 (April to September) of 15,000 planned Video and Central Office hearings and over 5,000 planned Travel Board were impacted by COVID-19. To date, 6,547 Video hearings, 400 Travel Board hearings, and 2,021 Central Office hearings have been postponed. The Board has reopened for Central Office hearings as of July 13, 2020. Additionally, the Board is continuing to solicit Virtual hearing conversions from all Travel Board and Video hearings already scheduled through the end of September. We are not at full capacity for Virtual tele-hearings and there are openings available. Those who do not choose to move to a Virtual tele-hearing will be placed in the postponement backlog.

3. Under normal, “steady state” operations, the Branch would coordinate roughly 3,000+ hearings a month – Video, Travel Board and Central office. The Board is working closely with VBA as they begin reentry to Regional Offices to determine when and where video hearings can be scheduled. Based on a predicted backlog of almost 9,000 postponed Veterans at the beginning of FY21 – combined with a decreased docket quantity for many Regional Offices
going forward – we expect that the backlog of postponed Vets won’t be consumed until well into the 2nd QTR of FY21 (JAN – MAR).
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Information Paper regarding
VA’s Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

VA has been monitoring PPE at the national and facility-level since the onset of the COVID19 pandemic. While the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has been able to utilize its national network to cross-level supplies across all facilities, supply chain disruptions during this pandemic have resulted in a rapidly changing environment. VHA’s guidance regarding the use of PPE has continually evolved with the understanding that each VA medical center (VAMC) requires the flexibility to respond quickly and appropriately to the situation in their local community.

There is an important distinction between source control and PPE. “Source Control” is any device that limits the spread of droplets from someone’s nose or mouth. Source control devices being issued could include cloth face coverings, surgical masks and KN95s among others. VHA does not consider source control to be PPE as it is meant to protect those around the wearer. PPE respirators filter the air that is coming into someone’s respiratory system. PPE requires fit testing and other types of training which would only be necessary for health care workers in certain environments.

VHA has followed Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines regarding PPE. On April 7, 2020 VHA distributed guidance recommending that VAMCs adopt CDC conservation and crisis strategies for mask and N95 respirators until supply chains were optimized. Additional information on CDC guidelines may be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html.

On April 16, 2020 VHA’s efforts to ensure adequate supply of masks and N95 respirators resulted in guidance to follow CDC-based contingency strategies. All facilities were directed to establish facemask and N95 respirator management plans and include pre-planning for scenarios permitting extended mask use, limited re-use, staff bringing their own facemasks and decontamination of used N95 respirators.

The Department is carefully following both expert guidelines, including that of the CDC which was crafted specifically for reusing PPE, as well as that of the manufacturers of the equipment that we have, and are confident that reusing a mask does not degrade its effectiveness in protecting our employees or our patients. While this is not the ideal way to use this equipment, it is not unique to VA and you can rest assured that it is not unsafe if the mask does not become damaged or soiled. This is being done across the country in a variety of health care settings with no known ill-effect on employees due to the disruption of the global and national supply chain. To be clear, this is not being done in our COVID-19 units without sterilization.

There is no way to determine the maximum possible number of safe reuses for N95 respirators. VA follows the decontamination and reuse of N95 respirators prescribed by manufacturers and is Food and Drug Administration-approved under an emergency use
On May 1, 2020 VHA issued clarifying guidance that face coverings would be required for source control in VHA facilities effective May 7, 2020.

VHA continues to monitor CDC guidance and track supply levels including both PPE and source control items to ensure Veterans, community members, and employees are as safe as possible while receiving or providing care.

Finally, VA provided an initial distribution of $5.3 billion dollars of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act supplemental to Veterans Integrated Service Networks to support increased bed capacity, supply purchases, salary costs and other needs associated with surge preparation. In addition to this distribution, VA is making corporate purchases for delivery throughout VHA to meet the mission of caring for Veterans and to support our fourth mission of supporting our Nation during a time of crisis.

**Spinal Cord Injuries and Disorders:**

Veterans living in Medical Foster Homes and in the community receiving selected home health care services including the Caregiver Support Program and Spinal Cord Injuries and Disorders (SCI/D) must have continued care utilizing the appropriate PPE to ensure the safety of both Veterans and their care givers. Additionally, universal face covering for source control in persons who may be asymptomatic carriers of COVID-19 is to be followed. The care giver and Veteran, if able to tolerate it, are to wear appropriate facial covering. To adhere to these standards, the following types of PPE may be requested for caregivers or Veterans receiving home care:

- a. Gloves
- b. Masks - Medical or Surgical mask if suspected bodily fluid or droplet exposure for visit/procedure
- c. Gowns
- d. Eye protection (e.g., goggles/face shields)
- e. Hand Sanitizer.
- f. Other items as needed if available.

Veterans and Active Duty Servicemembers (ADSM) with SCI/D perform and/or receive medically necessary care to complete bladder and bowel care, as well as other personal care (e.g. wound care or pressure injury care) that is a direct result of SCI/D-related impairments and/or complications. These activities may be performed by the Veteran/ADSM or an attendant, depending on their level of injury.

PPE is required to safely and appropriately conduct these medically necessary activities, such as urinary catheterization, performing a bowel program, changing dressings for wound care, and performing ADLs.
SCI/D interdisciplinary team members work closely with Veterans and ADSMs with SCI/D and their caregivers to monitor resources and supplies.

PPE needs are requested for each Veteran or ADSM with SCI/D by entering these as supply needs via the pharmacy package. Supplies are then delivered by CMOP.

**NOTE:** The Centralized Mail Out Pharmacy (CMOP) uses a third-party vendor to ship medical/surgical supplies directly to Veterans and ADSMs. Until such time as the vendor can bring in additional inventory to meet these requirements, facilities will be responsible for providing PPE to Veterans and ADSMs with SCI/D and their caregivers.

Department of Veterans Affairs
All –

There will be a White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting at 4:00pm in the White House Preliminary materials attached.

Sincerely,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
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From: VHA Healthcare Operations Center
Sent: Mon, 13 Jul 2020 13:01:05 +0000
To: VHA Healthcare Operations Center, VHA VISN Directors, VHA NCOD, HEFP/10NA5C; MD, MBA, FACHE; deloitte.com, erpi.net, mckinsey.com, bw-thinking.com
Cc: VACO, V20, OGC, VHA VISN DNDs, Prometeus, ERPi, IERPI, VHA VISN
Subject: Copy: COVID19 Moving Forward - Tue/Fri
This meeting invite will be refreshed regularly.

VHA leadership will continue to host the COVID19 Moving Forward call **every Tuesday and Friday**.

Please remember to mute your phones when you are not speaking. The entire audience may be muted; if you are dialing in, you must press *6 to unmute yourself. If you are able to, using the Skype integrated audio through your computer may provide a better meeting experience.

---

**Join Microsoft Teams Meeting**

+1.872-701-0185 United States, Chicago (Toll)

Conference ID 1(b)(6)

Local numbers | Reset PIN | Learn more about Teams | Meeting options
From: [b](6)@ovp.eop.gov
Sent: Fri, 10 Jul 2020 00:56:47 +0000
To: [b](6) L.
Subject: Fwd: White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting

Please convey my regrets

Get Outlook for iOS

From: [b](6) EOP/OVP [b](6)@ovp.eop.gov
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 8:50:48 PM
To: [b](6) DHHS.GOV <[b](6)@ovp.eop.gov>
A. EOP/WHO [b](6)@who.eop.gov [b](6)@treasury.gov [b](6)@treasury.gov; [b](6)@naiad.nih.gov [b](6)@naiad.nih.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov; [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov [b](6)@nsc.eop.gov; [b](6)@cms.hhs.gov [b](6)@cms.hhs.gov [b](6)@va.gov; [b](6)@hrsa.gov [b](6)@hrsa.gov; [b](6)@da.gov [b](6)@da.gov [b](6)@usda.gov [b](6)@usda.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov; [b](6)@wh.gov <Brett.Giroir@hhs.gov> [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov; [b](6)@hhs.gov; [b](6)@wh.gov.

To: [b](6) DHHS.GOV <[b](6)@ovp.eop.gov>
A. EOP/WHO [b](6)@who.eop.gov [b](6)@treasury.gov [b](6)@treasury.gov; [b](6)@naiad.nih.gov [b](6)@naiad.nih.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov; [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov [b](6)@nsc.eop.gov; [b](6)@cms.hhs.gov [b](6)@cms.hhs.gov [b](6)@va.gov; [b](6)@hrsa.gov [b](6)@hrsa.gov; [b](6)@da.gov [b](6)@da.gov [b](6)@usda.gov [b](6)@usda.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov [b](6)@hhs.gov; [b](6)@wh.gov <Brett.Giroir@hhs.gov> [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov [b](6)@fda.hhs.gov; [b](6)@hhs.gov; [b](6)@wh.gov.

Subject: Fwd: White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting

When: Friday, July 10, 2020 11:00 AM-12:00 PM.
Where: St. Agnes School, 2024 N Randolph St, Arlington, VA 22207

All –

There will be a White House Coronavirus Meeting at 11:00am on Friday, July 10th at St. Agnes School in Arlington, Virginia. For those unable to join in-person, there will be a call-in option from the White House.

Additional details have been shared with assistants, essential staff, and military assistants.

All materials for this meeting will be forthcoming.

Thank you,

Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
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Non Responsive Record
of the Freedom of Information
All –

There will be a **White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting** on Tuesday, July 28th at 1:00pm in the White House. **Materials attached.**

Thank you,
Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
The Office of the Vice President
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Subject: [EXTERNAL] White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting
Importance: High

All –

There will be a White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting on Tuesday, July 28th at 1:00pm in the White House. All materials will be forthcoming.

Thank you,

[Redacted]
Operations Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff
From: [Redacted]  
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 14:13:59 +0000  
To: [Redacted]  
Cc: [Redacted]  

Subject: [Redacted]

[Redacted]
Greetings,
Blacks In Government (BIg) VA Headquarters Chapter and Monumental Women Chapter of Federally Employed Women (FEW) will host a Real Talk series on Thursday, July 09, 2020, from 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. on Skype. The Real Talk session features special guest Mr. Luis Perez, First Deputy Director for Conscience and Religious Freedom, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights. Mr. Perez will speaking on Making It To The Senior Executive Service Through Collective Resilience and Team Building.

The “Real Talk” Series is a fun, interactive series that allows senior leadership to discuss their career progression in the government and provide (Real Talk) tips that are essential to employees succeeding and reaching their full potential. As time permits, there will also be a discussion on the importance of employee engagement within the workplace. This session is open to All VA employees.

Dial-in information is below. No RSVP required.

For more information, contact President, BIG VA Headquarters Chapter @va.gov or President, Monumental Women Chapter of FEW @va.gov.

Join Skype Meeting
Trouble Joining? Try Skype Web App

Join by phone
844-376-0278, 844-815-1331, 844-770-5400, English (United States)

Find a local number

Conference ID

Forgot your dial-in PIN? Help
VA Headquarters Chapter of Blacks in Government &
VA Monumental Women Chapter of
Federally Employed Women

Real Talk Series
Topic: Making It To The Senior Executive
Service Through Collective Resilience and
Team Building

Thursday, July 09, 2020
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Skype Call Line: 1-844-376-0278, code #

No RSVP required.
Join Skype line: https://meet rtc va.gov/monisha.barnes/YDY1LJLG
POCs for questions are ethel.sligh@va.gov or
monisha.barnes@va.gov

Luis Perez
First Deputy Director for
Conscience and Religious Freedom, U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services,
Office for Civil Rights

Choose VA
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Subject: COVID-19 Weekend Support Coordination Meeting

When: Occurs every weekend day from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM effective 7/4/2020 until 7/19/2020. (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Materials for Saturday's call have been attached.

Updated Invite to include call-in number
This revised meeting is scheduled for 90 mins and will focus on those VISNs and regions of the country experiencing a resurgence in COVID cases within the our facilities as well as the surrounding communities.

The first 30 minutes will be a McKinsey update “by exception” for notable areas. The next hour will be an update “by exception” for VISNs with issues relating to increased COVID infections. All VISNs should attend (principals can send a delegate).

Following the format established during the Monday, Wednesday, Thursday meetings, VISN leaders are asked to provide a VERBAL report by exception and concentrate updates on those areas requiring immediate action/attention and support coordination. Nothing significant to report (NSTR) is an acceptable update.

Join Microsoft Teams Meeting

+1 872-701-0185 United States, Chicago (Toll)
Conference ID (b)(9)

Local numbers | Reset PIN | Learn more about Teams | Meeting options
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