

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

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Dec. 6, 2017**Statement by VA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin - Permanent Community Care Legislation**

President Donald J. Trump is working to ensure his Administration fulfills its commitment to America's veterans so they receive the care they deserve. Under the President's leadership, we have enacted major reform bills including Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, the Forever GI Bill, and Appeals Modernization, among others.

I am pleased that Congress is working on the last piece of business this year in considering proposals for permanent authorization of community care for Veterans. As we have made clear for many months, Congress needs to pass a bill this year to help our Veterans get the care they need and have earned through their service and sacrifice to our country.

We are pleased to see key provisions of the Administration's CARE proposal to expand Veterans' choice in their care — and improve VA's ability to deliver that care — included in multiple bills under consideration by Congress. We appreciate the Senate's recent progress under Senator Johnny Isakson's leadership in reporting a bill out of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and the introduction of an additional CARE proposal by Sens. John McCain and Jerry Moran, and we look forward to working with Chairman Phil Roe in the House to help advance and improve their efforts.

While a limited number of legislative days remain on the calendar, we are hopeful that both the Senate and House can reach agreement on a bill before the end of the session. To ensure our Veterans receive uninterrupted care, we are open to a short term, very limited extension of funding for the existing program to allow sufficient time for a final agreement to come together.

One way or another, I remain confident that Veterans will soon see bipartisan legislation that will greatly improve their care by providing them with better choice in selecting their best possible healthcare options.