

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 9, 2018

The Honorable Phil Roe
Chairman
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives
335 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Roe:

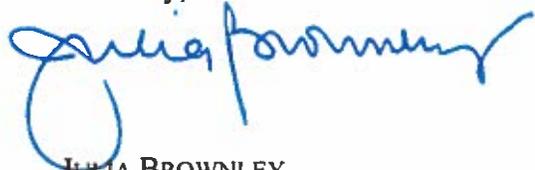
We write today to share our serious concerns about recent reports of undue influence by unaccountable outside individuals on the operations of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). As Members of this Committee dedicated to effective oversight of the VA and full transparency of taxpayer resources, we have been extremely alarmed by reports of inappropriate interference into the actions of the VA by personal friends of the President, whose qualifications and conflicts of interest are completely unknown.

On August 7, 2018, *ProPublica* reported that over the last year and a half a group of three individuals, all members of the President's private resort, "spoke with VA officials daily" and reviewed "all manner of policy and personnel decisions."¹ These conversations were private and hidden from Congressional oversight, these individuals have not disclosed any potential conflicts of interest, and their actions are not subject to the ethics guidelines that are essential to the strength of our democracy. Most concerning of all is the potential that these conversations and undue influence were used to financially benefit those involved, at taxpayer expense, or that their lack of qualifications and undue influence harmed the delivery of quality care to our nation's veterans.

As such, we respectfully request a full committee oversight hearing into whether these non-governmental and unaccountable individuals have improperly attempted to impact the work of the VA. We believe the House Veterans' Affairs Committee would benefit from testimony from the individuals named in the recent reports, as well as federal employees named in these reports who continue to work at the VA, especially former Acting Secretary Peter O'Rourke.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



JULIA BROWNLEY
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Health



ANN McLANE KUSTER
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

¹ Isaac Arnsdorf, "The Shadow Rulers of the VA," *ProPublica*, August 7, 2018, <https://www.propublica.org/article/ike-perlmutter-bruce-moskowitz-marc-sherman-shadow-rulers-of-the-va> (accessed August 9, 2018).