

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 15, 2025

The Honorable Doug Collins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Administration's late-night actions on February 13, 2025, to terminate over 1,000 dedicated federal civil servants at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) directly contradicts your recent testimony before the U.S. Senate, where you said, "I want to strengthen VA so it works better for America's heroes, and I will embrace your oversight and seek your counsel as we work together to do just that." Yet, rather than seeking the counsel of Congress, you took unilateral action to abruptly dismiss service-disabled veterans, military spouses, medical researchers, and countless others without any apparent justification—undermining the very mission of VA. There is nothing *strengthening* about gutting the workforce with the sacred mission to serve veterans, caregivers, and survivors.

It defies logic that you would terminate employees who are veterans themselves and who are serving veterans daily, all without regard to their performance or the devastating consequences of these firings. We know this to be the case because, on February 14, 2025, when congressional staff requested these justifications from your Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, the official currently performing the delegable duties of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs claimed no one in that office had knowledge of these actions until VA's press release was issued the night of February 13, 2025, at 9:06 p.m. This admission underscores the reckless, ill-planned nature of these firings, as well as a complete lack of transparency in how they were executed.

Adding to our concerns, this mass firing follows a directive from the Office of Personnel Management instructing federal agencies, including VA, to provide justifications for retaining probationary employees. The sequence of events strongly suggests that the OPM directive was nothing more than a hollow exercise, ignored in favor of an ideological purge. This lack of meaningful review casts serious doubt on your claim that "these moves will not negatively impact VA health care, benefits or beneficiaries."

Given these serious concerns, we demand that you personally brief Members of Congress by no later than February 26, 2025, and that at this briefing you be prepared to thoroughly answer Members' questions and to produce documentation and other evidence to support your claims.

The Honorable Doug Collins

February 15, 2025

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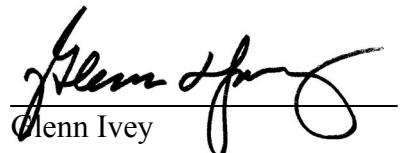
This Administration may believe it can run government agencies the way Elon Musk gutted Twitter—by arbitrarily slashing staff and expecting operations to somehow function seamlessly—but VA is not a tech start-up, and veterans are not an experiment. We will not allow reckless political games to undermine the care and benefits our veterans have earned.

We look forward to your prompt response.

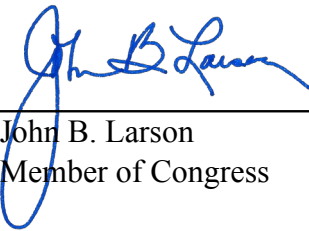
Sincerely,



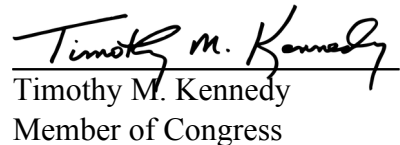
MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



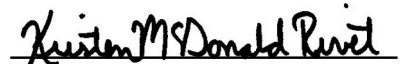
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress



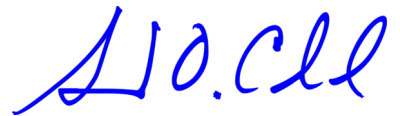
Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



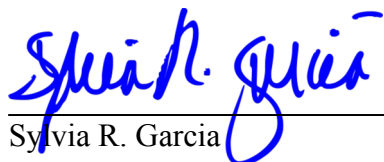
Kristen McDonald Rivet
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



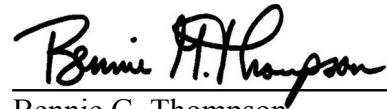
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



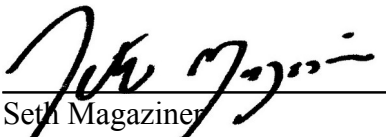
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



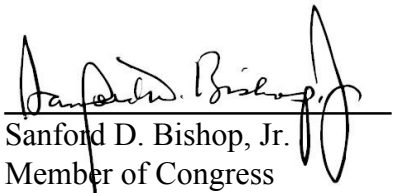
Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



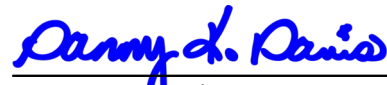
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



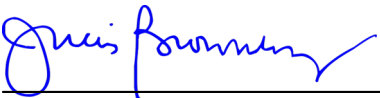
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



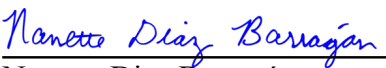
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



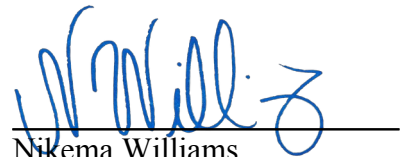
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Frank J. Mrvan
Member of Congress



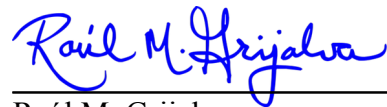
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



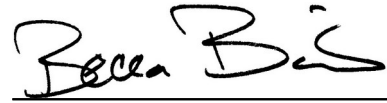
Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



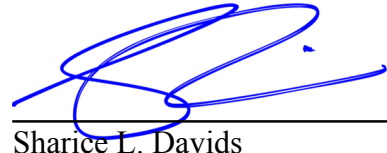
Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress



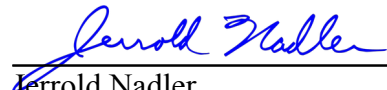
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress
Kansas Third District



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



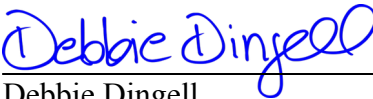
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



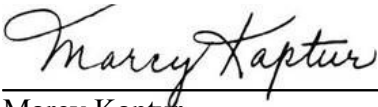
Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



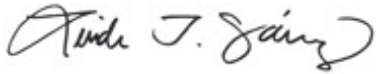
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



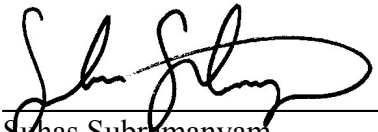
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



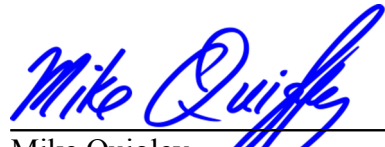
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



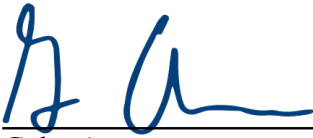
Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



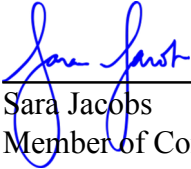
Patrick Ryan
Member of Congress



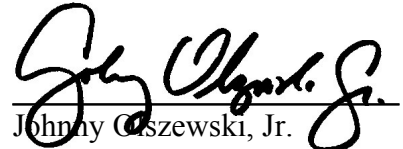
Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



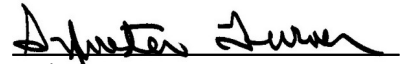
Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Johnny Ciszewski, Jr.
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



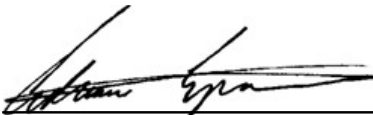
Sylvester Turner
Member of Congress



Laura Friedman
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



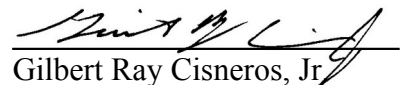
Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



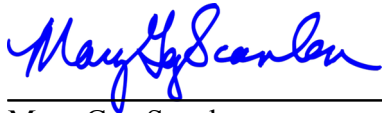
Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



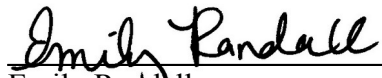
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Emily Randall
Member of Congress



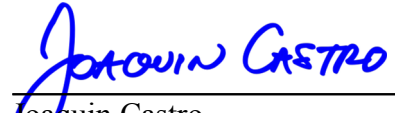
Grace Meng
Member of Congress



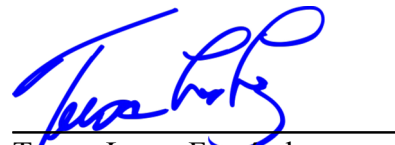
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Eugene Simon Vindman
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



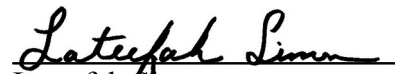
Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



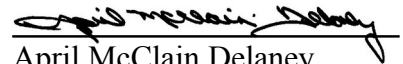
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



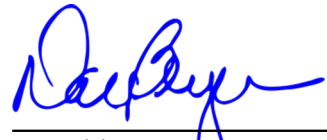
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



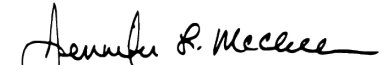
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



George Whitesides
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress