

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 5, 2016

Linda A. Halliday
Deputy Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Deputy Inspector General Halliday:

Recent news reports have revealed a troubling pattern at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of publicly posting inaccurate and out-of-date information on its website about the credentials and qualifications of physicians providing care at VA health care facilities. We urge you to investigate this matter and hold the VA accountable for its actions.

What started off as a local investigative report in the Midwest has turned into a national matter. In November, reporters in Minnesota and Wisconsin found that numerous doctors listed on the VA's "Our Doctors" website were not properly credentialed. Despite the VA's claims that its website was updated, private investigators uncovered numerous examples of doctors who have been inaccurately listed as licensed or certified in at least four states. A simple cross reference of the VA's website with public records kept by state licensing authorities and trusted medical boards shows that several doctors either never had or lost the licenses and medical certifications which the VA claimed they had.

Since the initial report, television stations in Colorado and New York have documented similar false board certification or licensure claims at VA medical facilities. In Buffalo, New York, station WGRZ sampled 133 doctors and found that 26 did not have the certifications that the VA listed. Of the 344 doctors checked by KUSA in Denver, Colorado, four did not have the certifications that the VA had posted and two dozen more had been certified but did not meet maintenance of certification requirements.

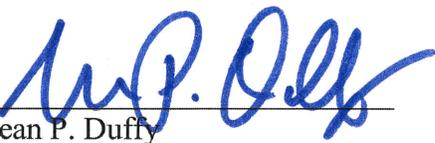
We are concerned the VA has failed to maintain basic yet essential records. This information is fundamental to the trust patients place in their health care service providers, and the VA must ensure it is accurate and up-to-date. In light of this troubling information, we write to request that you look further into this matter and consider the following questions:

- 1) When did the VA find out about the misinformation on its website?
- 2) Which VA medical centers have posted inaccurate information about their doctors?
- 3) How many VA physicians and other health providers have been inaccurately identified as properly licensed or certified? And were they aware of this public misinformation?
- 4) What actions were taken when the VA was made aware of this?
- 5) Have patients been notified about their physician's license denials, or other inaccurate information regarding their certifications?

- 6) Was patient care impacted at VA facilities as a result a physician's license denial or lack of updated certification?
- 7) Has there been a review of other current health care providers at the VA and their licenses and certifications?
- 8) What is the VA's current practice to ensure that all health care providers are up to date with license and certification requirements, and is the practice working?
- 9) Were any health providers who were inaccurately listed as licensed or certified on the VA's website compensated at an amount based on the inaccurate information listed?

All Americans deserve to have accurate information about the quality of the care they are receiving, especially those who served in defense of our Nation. If you have questions about this request, please contact Lindsay Gill on my staff at Lindsay.Gill@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-3365. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

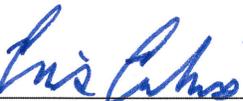
Sincerely,



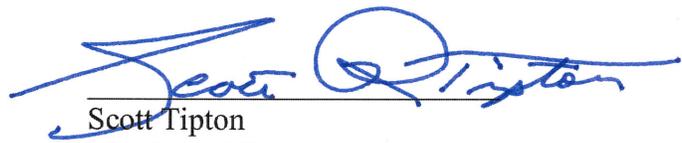
Sean P. Duffy
Member of Congress



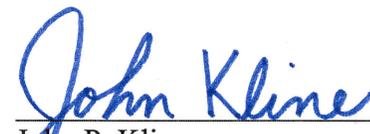
Tom Emmer
Member of Congress



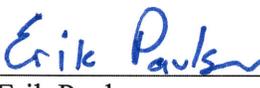
Chris Collins
Member of Congress



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



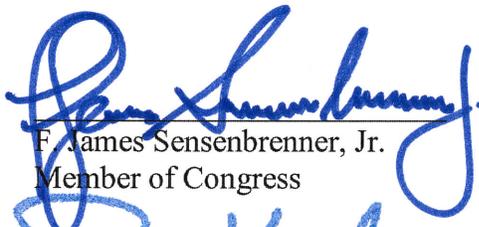
John P. Kline
Member of Congress



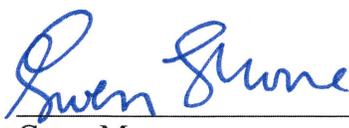
Erik Paulsen
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress