

# *The Caring for Our Veterans Act*

Scheduling, payment issues and confusion have been plaguing the Veterans Choice Program in Montana. That's why Senator Jon Tester has worked closely with veterans, advocates and Republicans and Democrats to eliminate the Veterans Choice Program as we know it and replace it with a bipartisan plan to streamline the VA's seven community care programs into one, easy-to-navigate program. **Jon's Caring for Our Veterans Act will empower veterans and their doctors to choose the best health care options by doing two things:**

## 1 Bolstering VA Health Care

*This bill increases the VA's capacity to provide quality care so fewer veterans need to seek care outside the VA system.*

### It does this by:

- Removing barriers for veterans to access mental telehealth care closer to home.
- Incentivizing medical residents and providers to work at rural, tribal and underserved VA facilities.
- Establishing mobile deployment teams to provide additional care at VA facilities that need it.
- Incentivizing nurses and heart-and-lung specialists to work at the VA, and clinical staff to work at Vet Centers.
- Strengthening peer-to-peer support for veterans undergoing care for trauma or those who live in rural areas.
- Bringing more doctors into the VA by increasing the number of VA medical residency positions by 1,500, and providing student debt assistance.
- Streamlining the process to approve leases for new or enhanced-use outpatient clinics.
- Expanding eligibility for VA caregiver support services to veterans of all eras, and modernizes and strengthens support services.

## 2 Streamlining Community Care

*This bill also cuts red tape and streamlines the VA's community care programs so veterans that must venture outside the VA system can get the care they need when and where they need it.*

### It does this by:

- Establishing a sole community care program that allows veterans and their doctors to choose where to get health care.
- Streamlining the process for a community provider to partner with the VA to provide care to veterans.
- Creating new standards for faster payments to providers.
- Allowing veterans to more easily access walk-in services at community providers.
- Improving financial accountability and transparency by requiring the VA to provide more extensive reporting on VA spending.
- Requiring stronger accountability and transparency to ensure Third Party Administrators like Health Net are meeting the terms of their contractual requirements.
- Strengthening the safety measures and guidelines for private providers to prescribe opioids to veterans.
- Extends protections to veterans who are harmed by negligence or unforeseeable events at a community medical facility.

### This legislation is supported by:

The American Legion • Disabled American Veterans • IAVA  
Military Officers Association of America • Paralyzed Veterans of America  
The Wounded Warriors Project • Veterans of Foreign Wars

U.S. SENATOR FOR MONTANA

**JON TESTER**