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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 24, 2014

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senator
241 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Flake
United States Senator
368 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators McCain and Flake:

Thank you for your letter related to alleged delays in health care access in the Phoenix VA Health Care System. I want you both to know that, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I take these allegations very seriously. I am troubled when I hear that any veteran may have received substandard service from VA. We, as a nation, have a commitment to provide timely, quality health care to veterans, and I am determined to assist VA in meeting this responsibility.

I am pleased to inform you that the VA's Office of Inspector General has a multidisciplinary team already on the ground in Phoenix. I have urged them to move their investigation forward as quickly as possible. I am sure that you will agree with me that an objective inquiry into these allegations is necessary before holding a hearing on this issue. In other words, we have got to know what the facts are. Once the IG collects additional information, we can engage in a more informed deliberation on the allegations in Phoenix. You have requested a hearing on this issue and I will commit to holding a hearing once the IG's inquiry is complete.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that VA health care is among the best in the nation – our veterans need and deserve that assurance.

Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
Chairman

CC: Ranking Member Richard Burr