

April 5, 2022

To: New Mexico Congressional Delegation  
New Mexico State Senators  
New Mexico State Representatives

The New Mexico State Senate has received numerous inquiries from veterans and their families from all over our State requesting that we communicate to your offices their concern over an issue dealing with access to the services of the Veterans Administration. This extremely serious issue is that the VA has announced its intention to eliminate some of its out-patient Medical Clinics in smaller cities of our State, citing budgetary concerns and low utilization. Closing these clinics will have a significant negative health impact on those to whom we owe so much. Further, it should be noted that in the late 1980's, New Mexico pioneered non hospital based VA outreach clinics for the entire nation. This heritage should not be eliminated.

The public outcry over this announcement has been prolonged and impassioned. Many New Mexico veterans live a considerable distance from Albuquerque, where the hospital is located, and therefore rely on these clinics to make accessible the medical care they depend on. As a result of this widespread reaction, the VA has indicated it will delay the closures for a year while a more comprehensive study of the situation is carried out.

We strongly urge you to work closely with the Veterans Administration to secure whatever budgetary increase would be needed to ensure the continued availability of community-level VA outpatient clinics at accessible locations around New Mexico. Your advocacy on behalf of your constituents is deeply appreciated and has proven very successful in the past. Please let us know how we, at the New Mexico State Senate, can lend support to your efforts.

Sincerely,

New Mexico State Senate