



The VA MISSION Act

*The John S. McCain III, Daniel K. Akaka, and Samuel R. Johnson
VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act*

Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Jon Tester's bipartisan *Caring for Our Veterans Act* gets rid of the Choice Program as we know it and establishes a new community health care system with a streamlined set of rules for Montana veterans, providers, and VA staff. After months of bipartisan and bicameral negotiations on his bill, Jon fought to get it included in the *VA MISSION Act*, which pulls provisions from numerous VA reform bills to create a bipartisan compromise that will improve the ability of veterans to access the timely and quality care they deserve.

The *VA MISSION Act* includes the following provisions from Jon's *Caring for Our Veterans Act*:

- Scraps the Choice Program as we know it today.
- Establishes one streamlined community care program that allows veterans and their doctors to choose where to get health care.
- Makes it easier for a community provider to provide care to veterans.
- Creates new standards for faster reimbursements to private providers who care for veterans.
- Requires stronger accountability and transparency to ensure government contractors like Health Net are meeting the terms of their contractual requirements.
- Strengthens the safety measures and guidelines for private providers to prescribe opioids to veterans.
- Removes barriers for veterans to access mental telehealth care closer to home.
- Incentivizes medical residents and providers to work at rural, tribal and underserved VA facilities.
- Provides greater recruitment, retention and relocation incentives so that VA can attract and maintain high-quality providers.
- Increases the amount VA will reimburse medical professionals for education debt reduction.
- Recruits medical scribes to assist physicians so that doctors can focus on serving veterans, and not filling out paperwork.
- Expands eligibility for VA caregiver support services to veterans of all eras, and modernizes and strengthens support services.

The *VA MISSION Act* also includes additional provisions authored by Jon:

- Develops criteria to identify underserved medical facilities and incentivize medical professionals to complete their residencies in rural areas.
- Establishes mobile deployment teams to provide additional care at the highest-need VA facilities.

