

**Statement for the Record - Chairman Isakson**  
**Joint Hearing on Legislative Presentation of the Disabled American Veterans**  
**February 28, 2017**

Welcome to the hundreds of DAV members and Auxiliary members in attendance and a special welcome to those who traveled to Washington, D.C., from Georgia. I regret that I am unable to attend the hearing today. On February 20<sup>th</sup>, I was admitted to Emory Saint Joseph's Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, for a scheduled operation on my back to address spinal deterioration. Per my doctor's orders, I am at home recovering the rest of this week before returning to Washington, D.C. I look forward to returning with a new and improved back to continue working harder than ever on behalf of veterans.

As I said at Secretary Shulkin's confirmation hearing, we're about making health care more available to veterans through care in both the private sector and VA. We don't want to privatize VA. We want to empower it. I look forward to working collaboratively with you and other stakeholders to help improve the care and services for our veterans.