

RON WYDEN
OREGON

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE

221 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-5244

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3703

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION

February 28, 2025

The Honorable Doug Collins
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue,
NW Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Collins,

The reported termination of contracts by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), to include radiation safety officers and medical physicists, directly jeopardizes the health and wellbeing of our nation's veterans. Simply put, veterans hospitals cannot provide lifesaving services safely to veterans without these contracts. That is an unconscionable betrayal of commitments made to Americans who served our country.

I have been informed that the VA terminated contracts assigned to the category of "consulting and research." As you should know, this category includes contracts with diagnostic medical physicists (DMPs), who fulfill legally-required positions as radiation safety officers and conduct the legally-required testing of the image quality and radiation output of machines used to diagnose and treat our veterans. Terminating these contracts will cause the shutdown of x-rays, computed tomography scans (CT scans), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), interventional radiology (IR) rooms, cardiac catheterization laboratories (cath labs), nuclear medicine, positron emission tomography (PET)-CT scans, fluoroscopy, mammography, and more, as all of these equipment require routine testing by these contractors. Without these contracts, there can also be no testing of new machines or machines after their repair. As a result, the VA and its facilities would be in violation of Veterans Health Administration directives and industry standards that guide medical technology best practices, which are in place to ensure the safety of patients.

I am concerned that contracts with therapeutic medical physicists (TMPs) may have also been terminated. These contractors have an essential role in creating individualized radiation therapy treatment plans for patients, calibrating machines to ensure the right dosage for patients, and engaging in quality assurance to make sure the equipment is safe for use. Without TMPs, critical patient treatment for our veterans, particularly those suffering from cancer, cannot continue.

Both DMPs and TMPs are highly trained and credentialed professionals, overseen by several medical and scientific bodies. Several studies show a staffing crisis across both communities, with many leaving the field due to retirement and burnout from unsustainable workloads. If the VA terminates its contracts with DMPs and TMPs, it will worsen this staffing crisis and may mean a significant struggle to fill the necessary positions our veterans require for their care.

911 NE 11TH AVENUE
SUITE 630
PORTLAND, OR 97232
(503) 326-7525

405 EAST 8TH AVE
SUITE 2020
EUGENE, OR 97401
(541) 431-0229

SAC ANNEX BUILDING
105 FIR ST
SUITE 201
LA GRANDE, OR 97850
(541) 962-7691

U.S. COURTHOUSE
310 WEST 6TH ST
ROOM 118
MEDFORD, OR 97501
(541) 858-5122

THE JAMISON BUILDING
131 NW HAWTHORNE AVE
SUITE 107
BEND, OR 97701
(541) 330-9142

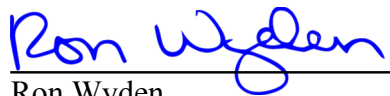
707 13TH ST, SE
SUITE 285
SALEM, OR 97301
(503) 589-4555

[HTTPS://WYDEN.SENATE.GOV](https://wyden.senate.gov)

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

I have fought tooth and nail over my career to enact several laws to expand veterans healthcare, including my own law that expanded mammography services for women veterans. I am appalled to hear that the VA may have callously terminated contracts, undermining these laws. Veterans are already facing long wait times for appointments and too often do not receive the timely care they require for serious service-connected diseases and conditions. With the promises made to veterans in mind, I ask that you restore these contracts immediately and detail all disruptions to patient care across VA facilities. I also ask that you commit to ensuring that there will be no other disruptions to veterans healthcare.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator