



Statement for the Record

of

John Vick

Executive Director, Concerned Veterans for America

on

H.R. 3482, Veterans Community Care Scheduling Improvement Act

before the

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

February 12, 2026

Thank you to Chairman Bost, Ranking Member Takano, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to submit this statement on behalf of Concerned Veterans for America (CVA). CVA is a grassroots network of thousands of veterans and military families dedicated to a freer and more secure America where every person is empowered to live their American dream. Our organization elevates veterans' unique perspectives in order to deliver people-empowering policy solutions, rooted in liberty-based principles, to the issues Americans face.

CVA is submitting this Statement for the Record in support of a common-sense piece of legislation being discussed before the Committee today, **H.R. 3482, The Veterans Community Care Scheduling Improvement Act**. CVA commends the Committee for its continued focus on improving veterans' access to care through practical, patient-centered reforms.

CVA's History in Veterans' Health Care Reform

Concerned Veterans for America (CVA) has spent 14 years advocating for reforms that empower veterans to access the health care that best meets their needs. CVA played a prominent role in elevating the voices of VA whistleblowers during the 2014 Phoenix VA scandal, when revelations emerged that veterans had died while waiting for care hidden behind secret waiting lists. In response to those failures, CVA supported early reform efforts such as the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, which, for the first time, expanded veterans' ability to seek care outside the VA system. CVA also helped advance the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017, addressing the personnel practices and incentives that contributed to the Phoenix scandal.

These efforts culminated in the passage of the VA MISSION Act of 2018, which CVA helped shape and support in Congress. Passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, the MISSION Act incorporated key recommendations from CVA's bipartisan 2015 Fixing Veterans' Health Care Task Force, most notably by the creation of the Veterans Community Care Program.¹ By consolidating fragmented choice programs and simplifying eligibility standards, the MISSION Act significantly expanded veterans' access to timely, high-quality care.

During the Biden Administration, CVA fought for additional congressional oversight as the Department of Veterans Affairs prioritized its bureaucratic interests over the well-being of the veterans it exists to serve. Veterans have suffered because the VA has not properly followed the requirements of the MISSION Act, particularly with respect to ensuring access to community care when eligibility criteria are met.

¹ "Fixing Veterans Health Care: A Bipartisan Policy Task Force," *Concerned Veterans for America*, 2015. <https://cv4a.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Fixing-Veterans-Healthcare.pdf>

As the second session of the 119th Congress considers targeted reforms to strengthen veterans' health care, CVA believes improving how community care functions in practice is a critical next step. While Congress expanded eligibility for community care through the VA MISSION Act, administrative processes, particularly scheduling and referrals, continue to limit veterans' ability to fully access those benefits. H.R. 3482 addresses this gap by modernizing the systems VA employees use to schedule community care appointments, increasing transparency, and reinforcing congressional intent.

H.R.3482 The Veterans Community Care Scheduling Improvement Act

The Veterans Community Care Scheduling Improvement Act, sponsored by Rep. Tom Barrett, would address a primary administrative weakness in the Veterans Community Care Program by streamlining the scheduling and referral processes. Currently, veterans must call VA schedulers directly to request community care referrals, a needlessly time-consuming process that does not reflect industry standards elsewhere in the health care system.

The bill would require the VA to establish an online scheduling program that allows VA employees to book appointments for eligible veterans with participating community care providers under the Veterans Community Care Program. The bill mandates a one-year implementation deadline and includes regulatory and outreach requirements within the first 90 days to encourage provider participation, including a public-facing website. In line with CVA's focus on transparency and government accountability, the Act also stipulates regular reporting requirements on the program's operations and participants. These guardrails will add results-focused accountability through periodic reassessments of program effectiveness.

An information technology system for scheduling is long-overdue. Under current practice, veterans seeking community care must call VA schedulers directly to initiate referrals. This process can involve long wait times, administrative barriers, and places substantial discretion in the hands of schedulers operating within opaque workflows. As CVA has previously noted, information obtained via Freedom of Information Act requests conducted by the Americans for Prosperity Foundation revealed that VA schedulers were trained to steer veterans toward VA facility appointments rather than neutrally presenting community care options.² These practices undermine congressional intent and weaken veterans' trust in the system.

H.R. 3482 improves this process by enabling VA employees to directly view, search, and schedule appointments with participating community care providers, as well as transmit necessary referral documentation electronically. Increasing the number of functions the VA can handle digitally will reduce administrative burdens and assist

² See: "Records Confirm VA's Use of Inaccurate Wait Time Numbers," Americans for Prosperity Foundation, October 1, 2021, <https://americansforprosperity.org/blog/records-confirm-va-inaccurate-wait-time-numbers/>; VA training flowcharts obtained via FOIA: https://americansforprosperity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/21-06268-F_Responsive_Records_1-Part-1.pdf#page=347

in the transition to Electronic Health Records, another long-sought industry standard of quality that the VA needs to deliver on. By modernizing scheduling and referral workflows, the bill will reduce administrative burdens and help ensure that community care operates as Congress intended.

Conclusion

Concerned Veterans for America urges Members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to **support H.R. 3482, Veterans Community Care Scheduling Improvement Act**, as a practical reform that builds on past community care efforts and helps ensure veterans are placed back at the center of their health care decisions. The VA can only accomplish its solemn obligation to care for "him who shall have borne the battle" when it begins to prioritize servicemembers over bureaucratic interests. This legislation is a step in that direction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Vick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being more prominent and the last name "Vick" following in a similar style.

John Vick
Executive Director
Concerned Veterans for America