

COVID-19

# Petition to Provide Competency-Based Credentialing

One way veterans can further assist communities impacted by  
COVID-19

Jake Wood March 31, 2020

Below is a letter submitted by Team Rubicon leadership to Mr. Bill McBride, the Executive Director of the National Governors Association, in reference our recent petition to providing competency-based medical credentialing to veterans with medical training.

To learn more and to sign the petition, please visit [Petitions.WhiteHouse.gov](https://petitions.whitehouse.gov).

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Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Mr. Bill McBride  
Executive Director  
National Governors Association

Mr. McBride,

Thank you for your leadership as our nation navigates the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Team Rubicon is a 501(c)3 nonprofit disaster response organization whose mission is to assist communities by mobilizing veterans to continue their service, leveraging their skills and experience to help people prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters and humanitarian crises.

We believe that, in response to COVID-19 and in order to increase the overall capacity of our nation's medical system, states should streamline their requirements and procedures to allow retired or recently transitioned veterans who held military medical care occupational specialties, or who completed certain medical training while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States, to meet certification, licensure, and other requirements applicable to civilian health care professions (such as emergency medical technician, paramedic, licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, physical therapy assistant, or physician assistant professions) in the State.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) declared a public health emergency on January 31, 2020, under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d), in response to COVID-19. We are asking the National Governors Association to review and encourage all Governors to exercise the provisions as described under **§247. Assisting veterans with military emergency medical training to meet requirements for becoming civilian health care professionals**. Additionally, Team Rubicon requests that the National Governors Association encourage states to expand or include measures within their Emergency Powers to allow for the use of qualified veterans who meet the requirements of Sec. 247 as healthcare providers. Addressing our nation's rising healthcare needs will require all hands on

deck. Given the nationwide scale of COVID-19 cases, states will not be able to rely on neighboring states to send health care providers to meet the demand. Authorizing recently retired or transitioned medically-trained veterans to serve within healthcare as they have been trained—allowing them to get into the fight—is a vital way to meet the nation’s rising needs: It utilizes the qualified citizens already in our communities.

There are hundreds of thousands of military veterans with extensive training and experience in emergency medicine, yet there exists no pathway towards credentialing or using these individuals in a time of domestic crisis. Our taxpayers have invested hundreds of billions of dollars to train these individuals as the world’s most nimble and effective problem solvers. Yet in this moment of need, we are keeping them on the sidelines. Thank you for your leadership at this critical time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jake Wood

Chief Executive Officer



Jake Wood

Jake Wood is cofounder and CEO of Team Rubicon, a veteran-led disaster response organization. Under Wood’s leadership, Team Rubicon has responded to over 400 disasters since the 2010 Haiti earthquake and grown from eight to more than 100,000 members.

Team Rubicon has been finished in the top three of the Nonprofit Times' "Top Nonprofit To Work For in America" lists three years in a row and has received top marks in financial transparency from GuideStar and Charity Navigator. Wood was the recipient of the Pat Tillman Award for Service at the 2018 ESPYS and is a leading veterans' advocate who has briefed several sitting presidents and testified before the Senate. As a Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps, Wood deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan as a Scout Sniper and earned the Navy-Marine Commendation Medal.