



Association of VA Anesthesiologists

September 14, 2020

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
801 Vermont Avenue
Washington, D.C., 20402

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

We are writing to you today to request a response to our May 11, 2020 letter invoking VA's "Stop the Line" initiative. Our letter addresses our strong opposition to the April 21st memorandum authored by Veteran Health Administration, Executive-in-Charge, Richard Stone, M.D. We believe the memorandum directly jeopardizes the quality of Veterans' health care and unnecessarily puts the lives of Veterans at risk.

As physicians working on the VA frontlines in both the operating room and critical care units, we have a shared commitment and responsibility to ensuring that our patients receive the best health care possible. It is because of that commitment that we, and over 300 of our anesthesiologist-colleagues, cosigned the May 11 letter to you. The letter presents in great detail our concerns, including the lack of any consultation with VA's anesthesiologists on the development and issuance of the memorandum. The letter concludes with a direct request that the memorandum be immediately rescinded.

We applaud your leadership of the Department and your ongoing efforts to strengthen the quality of health care available to our nation's Veterans. It is our hope that our combined voices on this critically important issue will merit your immediate attention. We look forward to speaking with you regarding our concerns and a response to our letter.

Sincerely,

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