



Eric Bunn Sr.
National Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Everett B. Kelley
National President

Dr. Kendrick B. Roberson
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March 10, 2025

Dear Chairman Miller-Meeks and Ranking Member Brownley:

The American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE) and its National Veterans Affairs Council (NVAC) appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on pending legislation. AFGE represents more than 800,000 federal and District of Columbia government employees, 310,000 of whom are proud, dedicated Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employees.

Discussion Draft, “Standardizing Treatment and Referral Times Act of 2025”

AFGE opposes the discussion draft by Chairman Miller-Meeks, which would establish that the period during which the referral of a veteran to a private provider remains valid begins on the day of the first appointment. This proposal makes a referral to a private provider evergreen for as long as it takes a provider to provide an initial appointment. As such, it directly negates the point of the referral to the private provider in the first place, which was to make care available more quickly if care isn’t available in VA within the drive times and wait times prescribed by Veterans Community Care Program access standards. This provision allows private providers to skirt timeliness requirements altogether by giving them an indefinite period in which they can provide services.

"No Wrong Door for Veterans Act"

AFGE opposes the elimination of the requirement that previous recipients of grants reapplying to the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program show evidence of efficacy. Under this legislation, previous grantees must only show that they have serviced a “significant” number of veterans when they reapply for grant funding. What purpose is served by providing grants to entities that cannot prove they have benefited veterans under their previous grant? This opens the door for charlatans to provide dubious care and put taxpayers on the hook for the costs.

AFGE looks forward to working with the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Health, to find better ways to improve the VA to make it work better for veterans.

Sincerely,

Daniel Horowitz
Acting Director, Legislative Department

