



October 11, 2019

The Honorable Chris Pappas  
Chair, Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on  
Oversight and Investigations  
B-234 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Berman  
Ranking Member, Veterans Affairs  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations  
3460 O'Neill House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Pappas and Ranking Member Bergman:

On behalf of the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), I would like to thank you and the members on the Veterans Affairs Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee for holding a very important hearing on October 16, 2019 to discuss the importance of patient safety, entitled: "Broken Promises: Assessing VA's Systems for Protecting Veterans from Clinical Harm".

The FSMB applauds the noble mission and dedication of the VA in serving the nation's veterans, and believes strongly that veterans and their dependents deserve the same level of quality care and appropriate regulatory oversight and accountability that is available to the general public. The sharing of information from the VA with appropriate state medical board(s) to expediently and efficiently identify unsafe physicians operating within the VA system would be an excellent step toward achieving this goal.

Improved sharing with state medical boards will significantly help the boards protect patients, both within and outside of the VA system. Health providers who have been deemed unqualified or unsafe to practice by the VA should not be allowed to practice outside of the VA, nor be able to conceal their disciplinary actions with discreet settlement arrangements. Proper notification of provider disciplinary proceedings will help ensure that unsafe physicians are not allowed to treat patients outside of the VA.

Founded in 1912, the FSMB is the national non-profit organization representing the 70 state medical and osteopathic boards of the United States, its territories and the District of Columbia. The FSMB serves as a resource and voice on behalf of state medical boards and provides services and initiatives that promote patient safety, quality health care and regulatory best practices.

The FSMB is pleased to offer its strong support in any of the Subcommittee's efforts that would improve the quality and safety of healthcare both within and outside of the VA system. We commend you and members of the subcommittee for your bipartisan leadership on this important issue and welcome the opportunity to work with you and Congress on this very critical issue.

Sincerely,

Lisa Robin  
Chief Advocacy Officer