

US Secretary of Veterans Affairs

RE: Veterans Access Choice and Accountability Act – Federal #HR3230

Dear (put in your Senators name),

I am writing to you today as a concerned citizen, because of a change in the contracting for dental care under the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act. My understanding is that the current contractor does not recognize denturists which is resulting in veterans losing access to more affordable denture care that they have previously received.

Denturists are licensed to practice separately from dentists in six states across the country, including Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Maine and Arizona. I resided in (fill in the state). They have separate practices and have been doing VA work for years. Denturists are specifically trained and skilled in fitting and manufacturing dentures and other non-orthodontic, removable dental devices. Many dentists and oral surgeons refer to them. By not allowing them to be providers for veterans, the VA is losing the ability to achieve maximum cost savings when a patient needs dentures.

According to our research, the language of the bill refers to a “licensed dental provider.” If this is the case, the dental contractor should be required to include all licensed providers in a state in their networks in order to ensure maximum access for veterans.

This is being required of contractors in states where the Medicaid program is moving to use of managed care contractors. Denturists are required to be part of the networks because it is a cost-efficient method for providing the service and because they are separately licensed and trained dental providers.

How can we work with the VA to make a change, so these licensed and trained providers are not shut out of the system unnecessarily? Licensing of health care providers is done by states, not the federal government, and national programs/contractors should recognize this.

Providers are having to turn long term patients away at the door due to this change – a change that was made with no industry discussion and no research into how denture care is best provided to veterans.

I would like the Committee of Veteran's Affairs to reinstate the ability of Denturists, who do exceptional work at a lower cost, to provide service to our veterans.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Contact info (address, email, phone)

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Veteran's Affairs
Members of the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs