



October 15th, 2016

The Honorable Beto O'Rourke  
House of Representatives  
1330 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R.6273: VA Health Care Provider Education Debt Relief Act of 2016

Dear Congressmen O'Rourke,

The American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) writes to thank you for your leadership and cooperation in introducing the VA Health Care Provider Education Debt Relief Act of 2016. As you have recognized, there are currently geographic areas, as determined by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which have a total of 43,000 vacancies in primary care, mental health care and dental care providers. Additionally, the Commission on Care report has concluded that, "in the area of educational debt repayment relief, VHA lags behind other federal and state agencies that use such programs to fill critical physician shortages in medically under-served areas." Your bill seeks to provide an incentive to attract qualified providers to fill the above noted vacancies by increasing total educational loan repayment amounts from \$120,000 to \$150,000 and annual debt repayment amounts from \$24,000 to \$30,000.

The VA Health Care Provider Education Debt Relief Act will grant our veterans better access to care by increasing the number of doctors available to be seen and will improve the overall quality of care that the VA is able to provide.

AMRA is pleased to support this legislation. This is a new approach to solving the problems created by current provider shortages and it will make a difference in the lives of thousands of service members, veterans, and their families.

We salute your leadership in addressing this important issue and we would like you to know that you have our continued thanks. Please feel free to contact us regarding this and any issue affecting veterans, retirees, their families, and their surviving spouses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ted Painter'.

Ted Painter  
National Legislative Director