



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



NFFE News Release

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NFFE Opposes a Shameful Bill to Privatize Veterans' Care; Hand Over VA Assets without Accountability and Transparency

Washington, D.C. – Today, the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) expressed outrage at a bill scheduled for a vote this week in the U.S. House that, if passed, would allow for the privatization of veterans' care and services to private providers inexperienced at treating veterans. In addition, the bill would allow for the disposal or transfer of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) assets to private entities with little or no meaningful accountability and transparency.

The VA MISSION Act (H.R. 5674, scheduled as a substitute amendment to S. 2372 on the House floor) grants expansive, unchecked new authorities to transfer and dismantle large parts of the VA health care system to private entities without oversight from Congress or stakeholders such as the Veterans Service Organizations.

“This legislation is one of the biggest giveaways to the private sector we have seen in decades, and it is a huge slap in the face to the veterans of this country,” stated Randy Erwin, NFFE National President.

“Disguised as a bill to give veterans more options for care, the obvious intent of this bill is to privatize VA services and assets, nothing more. No thought or consideration was given to ensure the quality of care for veterans. The legislation does nothing to support VA facilities and personnel. It is a bill designed by the private sector for the benefit of the private sector. It is a disgrace.”

The VA MISSION Act, hastily assembled and supported by groups that promote privatized veterans' care, will evade open debate through a closed rule on the House floor this week. Supporters hope to avoid debate in the Senate entirely by substituting the text of the bill for another unrelated bill already passed by the Senate, S. 2372. This parliamentary maneuvering can allow the VA MISSION Act to dodge committee and floor debate in the Senate.

“Everything about this bill is shameful,” continued Erwin, “The authors of this bill received ample input on how to further improve care and access to VA services but it was ignored entirely. Instead, it will place a dollar sign on the forehead of every veteran.”

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Established in 1917, the National Federation of Federal Employees is the oldest union representing civil service federal employees. NFFE represents 110,000 federal employees in 35 departments and agencies government-wide. NFFE is affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO. For more information, go to www.nffe.org.