

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 8, 2026

The Honorable Douglas A. Collins
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary Collins,

We write to request that you take immediate action to clarify guidance to streamline care and benefits for women veterans who have undergone service-connected mastectomies. Our offices have learned of women veterans who have had difficulty accessing a VA clothing allowance benefit to cover expenses related to wear and tear from prosthetics and devices following mastectomy procedures. We have also received reports that veterans have experienced delays in receiving post-mastectomy prosthetics from VA and its community providers.

Women veterans receive service-connected mastectomies for a variety of reasons, including as treatment for breast cancer and as prophylaxis for patients with a high risk of developing cancer. Women who have undergone mastectomies often wear breast prosthetics, specialty mastectomy bras, compression garments, prosthetic adhesives, reinforced support apparel, and other devices to support their physical and mental well-being after the procedure. Unfortunately, these devices can inflict severe wear and tear on a veteran's clothing, which creates a financial strain on the veteran.

The VA clothing allowance was designed to ease or eliminate this financial burden on veterans who use prosthetics and orthopedic appliances for service-connected conditions. However, we are concerned that a lack of awareness of post-mastectomy devices and a lack of clarity in the clothing allowance guidance could be preventing eligible women veterans from accessing the clothing allowance. While VA's existing guidance does state that veterans utilizing prosthetic devices should receive "strong consideration" for the allowance if they can prove evidence of clothing damage, it does not explicitly reference post-mastectomy devices.¹ This omission of explicit guidance for post-mastectomy devices could lead to veterans who use such devices being

¹ Eligibility of Clothing Allowance based on Orthotic/Prosthetic devices,
https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/Eligibility_of_Clothing-Allowance_based_on_Orthotic_Prosthetic_devices.asp

wrongfully delayed or denied in receiving this benefit. Swift action from VA to clarify eligibility will help equip providers with the knowledge and confidence to correctly determine clothing allowance eligibility for veterans using post-mastectomy devices.

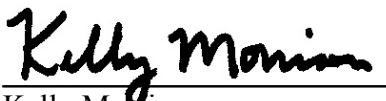
Women are the fastest growing group of veterans. As such, VA policies and procedures must always be designed and updated to meet their medical needs.

To that end, we respectfully urge you to issue clarifying guidance pursuant to 38 CFR 3.810 to state explicitly that veterans who utilize prosthetics or devices for a service-connected mastectomy are eligible for the VA clothing allowance, so long as they meet the existing requirements under the applicable statute and regulations.

We respectfully request that you provide a written response to this request no later than September 30th, 2026.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your response.

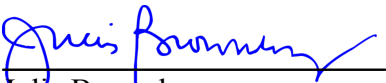
Sincerely,



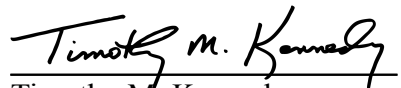
Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress



Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
Member of Congress