

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 18, 2025

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

Dear Secretary Collins,

We write with concern about the significant number of employees who have left the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in recent months. We fear that the departure of these employees, many of whom serve in veteran-facing and mission critical roles, will threaten the top-quality standard of care and benefits afforded to veterans in Minnesota. To better understand the impacts of the attrition, we request detailed data on the VA workforce serving our state.

Since your confirmation in February, you have made repeated public statements – including in testimony before Congress – that attrition in the VA workforce would not negatively impact the delivery of care and benefits to our veterans and that “mission critical” positions would be protected from reductions in force. As you know, the most recent data from the VA Workforce Dashboard shows that net losses for veteran-facing employees across VA are estimated at nearly 9,000, including 2,547 registered nurses, 1,412 medical support assistants, 890 physicians, and 1,472 veterans claim examiners.¹

This data appears to be consistent with a broader trend at VA since the beginning of the Trump Administration. As you know, VA announced in July that it would shed 30,000 employees from its ranks by the fall.² While this announcement was preferable to your original reduction in force target of 83,000 workers,³ we remain skeptical that VA can adequately meet our veterans’ needs as staffing levels diminish, especially as the agency continues to implement the PACT Act. In addition, your recent decision to terminate collective bargaining agreements for nearly all VA workers will almost certainly worsen working conditions and could lead to even more attrition, especially for physicians, nurses, and other mission critical employees. Worse yet, these

¹ VA Workforce Dashboard, Issue 28 (August 29, 2025), <https://www.va.gov/EMPLOYEE/docs/workforce/VA-Workforce-Dashboard-Issue-28.pdf>

² “VA to reduce staff by nearly 30K by end of FY2025” (July 7, 2025), <https://news.va.gov/press-room/va-to-reduce-staff-by-nearly-30k-by-end-of-fy2025/>

³ “VA plans to lay off as many as 83,000 employees this year” (March 4, 2025), <https://www.govexec.com/workforce/2025/03/va-plans-lay-many-83000-employees-year/403477/>

developments come as the VA Inspector General recently found that every single VA medical center in the country faces severe staffing shortages, including 130 positions (including 78 clinical positions) in the Minneapolis VA Health Care System, 34 positions (including 26 clinical positions) in the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, 58 positions (including 30 clinical positions) in the Fargo VA Health Care System, and 27 positions (including 21 clinical positions) in the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System.⁴ The Inspector General's Office also found that the Minneapolis VA Health Care System is facing the most nonclinical severe staffing shortages in the country, with 52 occupational shortages.

This is why we are requesting a more detailed understanding of the current workforce situation at VA facilities serving the state of Minnesota. Specifically, we ask that you provide data on all employee departures from January 1, 2025, through September 18, 2025 within the Minneapolis Health Care System,⁵ St. Cloud Health Care System,⁶ Fargo Health Care System,⁷ Sioux Falls Health Care System,⁸ St. Paul VA Regional Benefit Office, Fargo VA Regional Benefit Office, Sioux Falls VA Regional Benefit Office, Fort Snelling National Cemetery, and Fargo National Cemetery. We ask that your response include the following information for each employee:

- Occupation
- Job title
- Grade and step level
- Veteran status
- Disability status
- Military spouse status
- Years in service at VA
- Facility/location
- Reason for departure
- Whether the employee was retirement-eligible
- Whether the employee participated in the Deferred Resignation Program (DRP)
- Whether the employee was terminated
- Whether the employee resigned

We also ask that you provide detailed data on the number and type of veteran appointments cancelled or rescheduled due to staffing shortages at these facilities since January 1, 2025.

We believe that a more detailed understanding of the current state of the VA workforce is essential to ensure that Minnesota's veterans receive the top quality care and benefits they deserve, a goal all of us share.

⁴ "OIG Determination of Veterans Health Administration's Severe Occupational Staffing Shortages Fiscal Year 2025" (August 12, 2025), <https://www.vaoig.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2025-08/vaoig-25-01135-196-final.pdf>

⁵ VA Minneapolis Health Care System Locations, <https://www.va.gov/minneapolis-health-care/locations/>

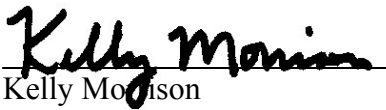
⁶ VA St. Cloud Health Care System Locations, <https://www.va.gov/st-cloud-health-care/locations/>

⁷ VA Fargo Health Care System Locations, <https://www.va.gov/fargo-health-care/locations/>

⁸ VA Sioux Falls Health Care System Locations, <https://www.va.gov/sioux-falls-health-care/locations/>

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to your response by October 1, 2025.

Sincerely,



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



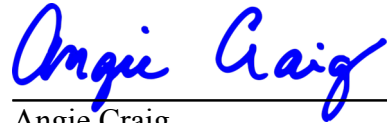
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Angie Craig
Member of Congress