Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 21, 2015

The Honorable Robert A. McDonald
Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
1722 Eye Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20421

Dear Secretary Robert A. McDonald,

We write today to request information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs regarding the Tennessee Valley Healthcare System. We have reason to believe that the Alvin C. York Campus, located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee has engaged in practices that have resulted in delays and denial of patient care.

It is extremely important that we offer our veterans the utmost care and support they deserve after serving their nation proudly. For the aforementioned reasons, my colleagues and I are requesting an Office of Inspector General report on the Murfreesboro VA facility. This report will investigate the troubling accounts we have received regarding the Alvin C. York Campus.

Our goal is to work with the Department to remove any barriers or inadequacies to patient care. Working together we can better support our veterans that seek the care they deserve. We look forward to working with you and the Department to resolve these problems.

Enclosed, please find questions related to the Murfreesboro facility. Should the Department wish to seek clarity regarding any of the below questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your consideration and timely response.

Sincerely,

Diane Black

Diane Black
Member of Congress

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Marsha Blackburn
Member of Congress

Scott DesJarlais, M.D.
Member of Congress

Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress

Phil Roe, M.D.
Member of Congress

cc: Juan A. Morales, Health System Director

**Questions for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

## I. Definitions

As used in these questions:

1. "Any" means more than one.
2. "Emergency Department" means a department designed to provide fast, life-or-limb saving care, that operates 24 hours a day.
3. "Facility" means Alvin C. York Campus, located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.
4. "Patient" means any veteran who would qualify for treatment from a Veterans Affairs medical center.
5. "Patients" means any veteran who would qualify for treatment from a Veterans Affairs medical center.
6. "Physician" means a person qualified to practice medicine, a doctor of medicine.
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8. "Management staff" means any employee at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs with the authority to make operational changes, such as, determining the hours of operation of a VA medical center.
9. "Urgent Care Center" means a same-day clinic that can handle a variety of conditions that need to be treated right away but is not an emergency.

## II. Questions

1. Is the facility accepting new hospital patients?
2. Is the facility accepting any hospital patients?
3. What is the number of hospital beds available at the facility in 2015?
4. What was the number of hospital beds available at the facility in 2010?
5. Are any patients being denied care from the facility?
6. Has the facility ever turned away a patient?
7. Are any patients being referred to the Tennessee Valley Healthcare System, Nashville Campus, located in Nashville, Tennessee?
8. Is there a current and operational contract with Meharry Medical College to provide interns to the facility?
9. How many interns from Meharry Medical College are currently working at the facility?
10. Is the Emergency Department closed at the facility?
    a. If yes, state the reasons for closing the Emergency Department at the facility?
    b. If no, state the hours of operation of the Emergency Department?
11. Did you provide notice to veterans regarding the closure of the Emergency Department?
12. Did you provide veterans with an alternative Emergency Department location?
13. What policy and procedures does the facility have in place to notify veterans about facility changes to patient care, such as, the closure of an Emergency Department?

14. Is the facility's Emergency Department now operating as an Urgent Care Center?
15. State the management staff that made the decision to close the Urgent Care Center at 8:00 pm?
16. Was there a study or analysis made to determine the appropriate time to close the Urgent Care Center at 8:00 pm?
17. State the reasons for closing the Urgent Care Center at 8:00 pm?
18. State the number of physicians required to be present at the Urgent Care Center?
19. State the number of veteran complaints that were received by the facility or the Tennessee Valley Healthcare System in the last five years?