



March 1, 2017

The Honorable Dr. Phil Roe  
334 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Roe:

As the President & CEO of Student Veterans of America, and on behalf of nearly 1,400 chapters located at colleges and universities nationwide, I wanted to demonstrate our support for some of your recent work with the “VA Accountability First Act of 2017”. This proposal seeks to establish stronger accountability measures for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employees and affords the Secretary the necessary tools to take action with troublesome department employees.

We have witnessed first-hand why it is imperative to have stronger accountability measures for VA employees. This bill gives the Secretary of VA the authority to take necessary action against negligent employees, such as recalling their bonuses and relocation expenses. Accountability is a major challenge for VA and this bill addresses accountability challenges with specific measures.

As supporters of the previous legislation in the 114th Congress, we support these necessary changes. Student veterans nationally rely on VA for benefits as well as other programs and services. The goals of this legislation align with those of SVA. As Former Secretary McDonald said, “As the Nation’s foremost advisory body in medicine and healthcare, you know that the Department of Veterans Affairs is in the midst of overcoming problems involving access to healthcare. We own them, and we’re fixing them.”

The new Secretary of VA, Dr. David Shulkin, requires legislative authority to fix accountability challenges so he may hold employees accountable with appropriate policies and processes. SVA supports this bill for these reasons. We greatly appreciate the work of your office and that of your colleagues on this important proposal. Please feel free to contact me directly if you should have any additional questions on this matter by phone at 202-223-4710, or by email at [jared.lyon@studentveterans.org](mailto:jared.lyon@studentveterans.org).

Sincerely,

Jared Lyon  
President & CEO  
Student Veterans of America