

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 14, 2022

The Honorable Denis McDonough
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary McDonough,

I write to express my concern with the recommendations released today by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission. Specifically, the impact that the closure of Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in rural communities could have on New Hampshire veterans.

As you know, New Hampshire is the only state in the country without a full-service VA Hospital creating unique challenges in access to care for Granite State veterans. CBOCs in New Hampshire's rural communities have helped to fill the gap and provide opportunities for those who have served to access care closer to their residences.

The recommended closure of the Littleton, NH and Conway, NH CBOCs would leave a tremendous geographical gap in access to care for veterans who live in New Hampshire's North Country. These veterans already face challenging conditions in access to care, facing treacherous driving conditions and long commutes particularly during the winter months.

New Hampshire has a proud tradition of military service and boasts the highest per capita veterans population in the nation. More than 10% of the New Hampshire population is made up of veterans. We owe the men and women who have served our nation in uniform a tremendous debt of gratitude. Their service and sacrifice must be met with our commitment to ensure that every veteran is able to access the care and support they need. I urge you to consider the serious impact that closing rural CBOCs New Hampshire would have on veterans in the region and reconsider the recommendations outlined in the AIR Commission report.

Sincerely,



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress