

Dr. Burgess Special Address May 21, 2018 Improving Care for America's Veterans

Hello, this is your Congressman Michael Burgess.

During a full legislative week, I wanted to make certain you are aware of ways Congress is working to help our nation's veterans. Throughout the year, I hear from North Texans who are concerned about the care available to veterans in the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system.

American veterans deserve the best possible. Congress is working on. On Wednesday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the VA MISSION Act with an overwhelming, bipartisan majority. This bill will ensure that veterans have timely access to quality health care options.

This bill first provides robust funding for the Veterans Choice Program, which was otherwise set to expire in the coming months. It streamlines VA community care programs into one cohesive program, and it creates more choices for veterans' health care.

The bill also expands the VA's Family Caregiver Program to include veterans who served in wars prior to September 11, 2001. Finally, the bill requires the establishment of a commission to conduct an asset and infrastructure review, and provide recommendations to modernize the VA's medical infrastructure. All of these reforms are substantial, all are important in improving health care for our nation's veterans.

Moving forward, Congress has more work to do to ensure that veterans have access to excellent care, and that the Department of Veterans Affairs has the financial security and resources to serve our veterans for decades to come. Earlier this month on the fourth anniversary of the Phoenix VA crisis, President Trump told Congress to fix the Choice Program by Memorial Day. Now that the House has passed this important legislation, I join President Trump: the Senate has to pass this bill, and we have got to get it to the President's desk.

As we prepare for Memorial Day in a few short weeks, please join me in remembering our nation's veterans, those who have come before, and their selfless service to our country.

As always, I appreciate your comments and your questions on this issue or any other issue. May God bless you and your family, may God bless our veterans, and as the song says, God bless you Texas.