

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 4, 2012

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Buck McKeon
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Levin, Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member McCain, and Ranking Member Smith,

I am writing to you today, respectfully asking that the Conference for the FY13 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) retain language on the future of TRICARE Prime throughout the United States. I appreciate the opportunity to contact you on this important issue.

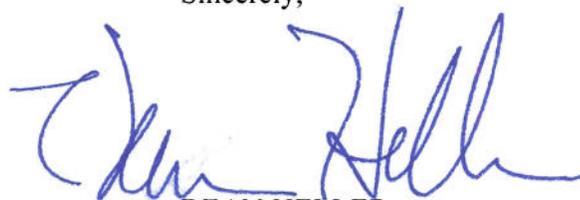
Under the leadership of both your committees, it has been clear that providing extraordinary care to our military personal, their families, and veterans is of the utmost importance to Congress. I share that concern, which is why I filed an amendment during consideration of the FY13 NDAA that requires a report on the future availability of TRICARE Prime throughout the United States.

My amendment (S. Amdt. 2969) was agreed to by unanimous consent. This non-controversial, germane amendment will require the Department of Defense to issue a report to the Senate and House Armed Services committees regarding changes to TRICARE Prime. The report, which is to be issued within 120 days of the bill's enactment, must identify areas where TRICARE Prime will no longer be available, estimate the increase in out-of-pocket expenses to affected beneficiaries, and estimate savings to the Department as a result of such changes. Furthermore, the report must describe how the Department will continue to assess the impact on access to care for beneficiaries who can no longer access TRICARE Prime and provide a report on the effects of potential cuts to TRICARE Prime for these families.

I am respectfully asking that, when the Conference on the FY13 NDAA commences, this amendment remains in the bill. I believe it is imperative that the military community understand whether their TRICARE coverage will change.

I appreciate the opportunity to write to you on this important issue and for your continued leadership on military issues.

Sincerely,



DEAN HELLER
U.S. Senator