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United States Senate

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April 6, 2016

The Honorable David Shulkin
Undersecretary of Health
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Undersecretary Shulkin:

I write to you today to request a status update on the investigation led by the Office of Accountability Review into the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) headquartered at Ft. Harrison, Montana. Following numerous complaints to my office I have long called for investigation into the Ft. Harrison VA and I will continue calling for action to be taken.

The Office of Accountability Review was established to ensure leadership accountabilities for improprieties related to patient scheduling and access to care, whistleblower retaliation, and related matters that impact public trust in the VA. Unfortunately, I have heard and reported numerous cases to the VA and Office of the Inspector General (OIG) regarding those types of misconducts in Montana. Two weeks ago, I wrote a letter to OIG leadership requesting a status update. Today, since this investigation is also focused on leadership, I am calling on you to put forth the status of the investigation as well.

It is simply unacceptable that reports of poor access to care, retaliation against employees, and even extended vacation time taken by leadership have continued to occur in Montana VA without accountability. It is clear to me that Montana veterans and VA employees are losing trust in the system. Montana has thousands of dedicated and selfless employees working for the VA to ensure our veterans are given the care they need; the failures of few should not be a reflection of all. This problem must be halted immediately.

Thank you for your investigation into this matter and your dedication to serving our veterans. Please contact me as soon as possible with the status of this investigation at 202-224-2651.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator