

United States Senate

March 23, 2016

Linda A. Halliday
Deputy Inspector General
Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Inspector General (50)
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Deputy Inspector General Halliday:

I write to you today regarding the status of your investigation into the Montana Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), a system that provides care to a state with close to the most veterans per capita. Montana VA has thousands of hardworking, wonderful, and dedicated employees that proudly and successfully serve the needs of those who served our country; unfortunately, my office has placed multiple investigation requests following extremely concerning reports that a few that are plaguing the system. I urgently request the VA Office Inspector General (OIG) come forward with the status of those reports.

Last week I was once again informed of a local doctor dropping partnership with the VA after over five months of providing care to veterans without reimbursement, and once again I was informed of key positions going unfilled to provide care to veterans in the VA. Reports of staff leaving due to a toxic system are far too common, and the continued stories of veterans losing the care they need is absolutely unacceptable. The VA OIG must come forward and hold those responsible for a failing system accountable. Whether it's another one of the stories referenced above, one of staff taking extended personal travel time, or another report of employee retaliation filed through my office; I cannot hear another story about Montana VA failing our veterans. This issue must be brought to the spotlight.

I am aware the VA OIG has started to investigate the Montana VA and I write today to encourage you to hold those you find at fault fully accountable, as soon as possible. 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