

National Veteran Small Business Coalition



"One Cause, One Voice"

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Headquarters

14001-C St. Germain Drive, #652
Centreville, VA 20121

703-282-4140

www.nvsbc.org

October 2, 2014

Honorable Robert A. McDonald, Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary McDonald:

Section 203 of Public Law 113-146 the "Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014" requires the Secretary VA to "seek to enter into an agreement with a technology organization or technology organizations" to "review the needs of VA with respect to the scheduling system and software" used by VA. A September 16th, 2014 Federal Computer Week article titled: "*VA Accepts Contractor's Offer of Help With Scheduling*" reports that VA has entered into an agreement with the Northern Virginia Technology Council (NTVC). The article goes on to say the NTVC and Senator Mark Warner were instrumental in having this provision included in the law. The team assisting VA in this review is comprised of Booz Allen Hamilton, HP, IBM, MITRE Corporation and SAIC.

If the solution to the VA's current scheduling debacle is business as usual from very large, entrenched businesses, I'm sure there's a big company, big money solution in the offing. However, why not take advantage of legendary "GI ingenuity" and reach out to the veteran and service-disabled veteran small business community for input? The law provides the Secretary of the VA with the authority to consult multiple technology organizations and it will cost the VA nothing additional to do so.

On behalf of the many veteran and service disabled veteran owned small businesses in the information technology field, many of whom have firsthand knowledge of scheduling issues; what consideration was given by VA to include veteran and service disabled veteran owned small businesses in this study? Were any veteran owned small business technology organizations considered and if not, why not? The National Veteran Small Business Coalition has a very active IT Industry Forum. As customers of VA healthcare services, who better to assist with the effort to address the VA's current scheduling woes than the men and women who live with the realities of the system as it is every day?

Very sincerely,

Scott Denniston

CC: Senator Mark Warner (D-VA)
475 Russell Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510
Ms. Bobbie Kilberg, President NVTC
2214 Rock Hill Road, Suite 300, Herndon, VA 20170