

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 1, 2022

The Honorable Denis McDonough  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary McDonough:

We write today regarding the ongoing issue of staffing shortages at Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities located in Arkansas.

We have heard for years from veterans in Arkansas about the shortage of doctors and other clinical positions at Arkansas' VA facilities. According to a recent VA Office of Inspector General Report, the John L. McClellan Memorial Veterans' Hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas, has six clinical positions designated as a severe shortage, and the Fayetteville VA Medical Center in Fayetteville, Arkansas, has 18 clinical positions designated as a severe shortage.<sup>1</sup>

We respectfully request that you respond to the following questions regarding the current status of clinical positions at VA facilities in Arkansas:

1. What is the most up to date number of vacant clinical positions in each VA medical facility in Arkansas?
2. What is the average time it takes to fill clinical positions?
3. What authorities do VA facilities have to incentivize hiring clinical positions?
4. Are the VA facilities in Arkansas using any contracted clinical workers at this time?
5. What are the barriers to filling clinical positions in Arkansas and throughout the country?

We are committed to delivering timely care for Arkansas' veterans who have honorably served our country in the armed forces. Ensuring each veteran, as well as their families, receive the care and benefits they have earned is one of our top priorities.

Should you require any additional authority from Congress to address these concerns, we urge you to notify us as soon as possible. We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with you to address this important issue.

Sincerely,



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John Boozman  
United States Senator



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Tom Cotton  
United States Senator

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General. "OIG Determination of Veterans Health Administration's Occupational Staffing Shortages, Fiscal Year 2022." Report #22-00722-187. July 7, 2022.



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Eric A. "Rick" Crawford  
Member of Congress



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French Hill  
Member of Congress



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Steve Womack  
Member of Congress



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Bruce Westerman  
Member of Congress