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House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515-6015

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SUSAN ROSS  
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January 12, 2026

The Honorable Doug Collins  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Collins,

I write with strong concerns regarding the Department's plan to eliminate as many as 35,000 positions, including doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals. These are positions that were requested, or identified as necessary, by facility leaders across the country. Indiscriminately eliminating these positions from your HR system without analysis is unacceptable, and in contradiction of your repeated assurances that veterans would not be impacted by staff cuts. This cut would be in addition to the over 30,000 positions that have already been eliminated or vacated since the start of this year. I am concerned that these cuts will add further strain on a workforce that has been understaffed for years, especially as I continue to hear from VA doctors and nurses that workloads are unmanageable, leading to delayed or insufficient care of our veterans. Please provide responses to the following questions:

1. Please provide the Committee with the internal memo that directs the elimination of these positions from the human resources system or database.
2. Please provide a list of all 35,000 positions eliminated from the database. This list should include the job title, job category, location, and rationale for not filling the position.
3. In 2025, over 30,000 VA employees either voluntarily separated from VA, took deferred resignation, or voluntary early retirement. Will vacancies resulting from these staff cuts be included in the 35,000 positions you are now eliminating?
4. The Committee has consistently provided funding equal to the levels requested in the President's budget, including in the recently enacted FY26 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act. Was funding for these 35,000 positions

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included in the FY26 budget request? If so, what is the Department's plan for the funding that will no longer be used for these positions?

5. Will these eliminations impact the Department's ability to meet claims processing, wait times, or other Departmental goals or targets?
6. How will these eliminations impact the implementation of the PACT Act?

I look forward to your responses by February 1, 2026.

Sincerely,



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Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Military Construction and Veterans  
Affairs