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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

October 5, 2007

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
READINESS
MILITARY PERSONNEL

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
WORKFORCE PROTECTION
HEALTHY FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

www.shea-porter.house.gov

Mr. Gordon H. Mansfield
Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Acting Secretary Mansfield:

Congratulations on your recent assignment as the Acting Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. As a Freshman Member of the 110th Congress and a Member of the House Armed Services Committee, I am proud to have supported the largest increase in funding for the Department in its history. I look forward to working with you and others to ensure that our veterans and our troops returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan are provided with the best possible care and services.

I write you today to bring to your attention a very serious and pressing issue for our veterans in New Hampshire. New Hampshire is the only state in the country that lacks a full-service veterans hospital – a serious inequity for our state and our state's veterans and a problem which I hope we can work together to solve. Seven years ago, the VA Medical Center in New Hampshire discontinued many inpatient and outpatient care services. In many cases, veterans are already forced to travel long distances for their appointments, and if the care they need is not available, they may be transported to centers in Massachusetts which often places a medical, financial, and transportation hardship on the families and patients. In no other state in the country does this happen, and it puts our veterans at serious risk.

Those brave men and women who have put their lives on the line in service to our country deserve the highest level of service. In New Hampshire, the lack of a full-service hospital puts their care in jeopardy. I am hopeful that by working together the Congress and the Veterans Administration will be able to give the staff and their patients what they truly need – a full-service Manchester facility.

Again, I look forward to working with you and wish you the best in your new position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Shea-Porter".

Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress

Cc: Marc F. Levenson, MD, MBA