

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

September 2, 2020

The Honorable James M. Inhofe  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Chairman  
House Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Reed, and Ranking Member Thornberry:

As the conference committee continues its negotiations for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (NDAA), we urge you to retain Section 718 of the House bill.

The Department of Defense is pursuing an effort to realign military medical treatment facilities (MTFs). Many of these facilities will pivot to serving only active-duty personnel. These changes will impact 80,000 active-duty family members and 120,000 retirees and their families.

In Maryland, the Department proposes restricting outpatient clinics at Naval Support Facility Indian Head, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Fort Detrick, and Aberdeen Proving Ground to active-duty personnel. The ambulatory surgery center at Fort Meade would be downgraded to an outpatient clinic.

These changes have been rushed through without sufficient public input and without the necessary effort to ensure that local health systems are informed of expected changes and prepared to absorb the surge of patients seeking care in the community. Section 718 of the House bill responds to these concerns and requires the Department to do its diligence.

Specifically, this section would require the service secretaries to review military medical manpower requirements for all national defense strategy scenarios, identify billets affected by the proposed changes, and plan for the mitigation of any resulting health care service gaps. The Department would determine the capacity of local health care networks to provide care for beneficiaries affected by these changes and affected individuals would be entitled to a transition plan and a public forum to discuss their concerns.

Our constituents have contacted us to share their concerns with the proposed realignment of MTFs in Maryland. We are confident that they are not alone. We believe the House's proposal is an appropriate response to these concerns that will require the Department to ensure that our active-duty military families, retirees, and retiree families will not lose access to quality health care or see interruptions in their care as a result of this action.

We appreciate your consideration and urge you to include Section 718 of the House NDAA in the final conference report.

Sincerely,

/s/Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

/s/Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

/s/Steny H. Hoyer  
Member of Congress

/s/C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress

/s/John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

/s/Kweisi Mfume  
Member of Congress

/s/Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress

/s/Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress

/s/Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

/s/David Trone  
Member of Congress