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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

December 21, 2018

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave NW
Washington, DC 20420-0001

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

I write today to inform you that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is this month's recipient of my Golden Fleece Award.

According to a recent report by the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG)¹, without correction, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) could issue an estimated \$2.3 billion in improper payments to ineligible programs over the next five years.

The OIG conducted this audit to determine if VA and State Approving Agencies (SAAs) were effectively reviewing education and training programs that enrolled Post-9/11 GI bill students to ensure only eligible programs participated. Based on its review, the OIG estimated that 86 percent of SAAs did not adequately oversee the education and training programs to make certain only eligible programs participated. This is unacceptable, and VA must do better.

The OIG report includes recommendations to address this issue, and I urge you, in your role as VA Secretary, to review this report and work to adhere to the VAOIG's recommendations to ensure that critical funds for our Nation's veterans are not wasted on these improper payments.

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

Sincerely,

French Hill
Member of Congress

¹ Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General. "VA's Oversight of State Approving Agency Program Monitoring for Post-9/11 GI Bill Students." December 3, 2018