

September 17, 2019

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 the most recent recipient of my Golden Fleece Award for billions of dollars in improper payments in Fiscal Year (FY) 2018.

According to a recent report by the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG), “in its FY 2018 Agency Financial Report, VA reported improper payment estimates totaling \$14.73 billion, an approximately 38 percent increase from the \$10.66 billion reported in FY 2017.”<sup>1</sup>

The VAOIG conducted this annual review to determine VA’s compliance with the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA) for FY 2018 and found the VA did not satisfy two of the six requirements of IPERA, in addition to the more than \$4 billion increase in improper payments from FY 2017 to FY 2018.

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.

When our nation is more than \$22 trillion in debt, our federal agencies must be good stewards of taxpayers’ dollars. 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

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General. “VA’s Compliance with the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act for FY2018.” June 3, 2019. Report #18-05864-127.