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**Washington, DC 20515-3226**

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August 30, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
U.S. House of Representatives  
232-H U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
204-H U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner, Leader Pelosi, Chairmen Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey,

As you work to develop a continuing resolution for FY2014, I urge you to continue funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs childcare pilot program authorized under Sec. 205 of P.L. 111-163, which will expire October 2, 2013.

The 2-year pilot program was established by Congress as part of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, and passed the House of Representatives unanimously 419-0.

The pilot program established three Childcare Service Centers at the VA Medical Centers in Northport, NY, Tacoma, WA, and Buffalo, NY. The program at the VA Western New York Healthcare System – the “Kids Korner Waiting Room” – provides free, drop-in childcare service for eligible veterans waiting for appointments.

This program has helped veterans access the health care they deserve by removing at least one fairly large obstacle from their path. A survey conducted by the VA found that nearly a third of Veterans were interested in childcare services, and more than 10 percent had to cancel or reschedule VA appointments due to lack of childcare. Congress should not allow a lack of child care to prevent veterans from making and keeping clinic appointments.

We have witnessed the extraordinary and inspiring work our service members perform in the most difficult of situations across the world and we owe our returning veterans the same devotion and care when they come home. Chief among these obligations is continuing efforts to improve access to health care for our Veterans, and these childcare centers facilitate the ease and ability for Veteran’s to visit the VA.

Thank you for your support for this program and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,  
  
BRIAN HIGGINS  
Member of Congress