

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 29, 2022

The Honorable Seileen Mullen
Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs
Defense Health Agency
7700 Arlington Boulevard
Suite 5101
Falls Church, VA 22042-5101

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary Mullen,

We write to request information regarding the Department of Defense Health Agency's (DHA) monitoring of TRICARE beneficiaries' access to retail and community pharmacies.

It has been brought to our attention that Express Scripts has reduced reimbursements for prescriptions dispensed at in-network retail pharmacies for 2023. These reductions may leave many retail pharmacies unable to participate in the TRICARE Pharmacy Program, thus significantly impacting 9.6 million TRICARE beneficiaries' access to local pharmacies. Most recently, Express Scripts notified pharmacies and beneficiaries that current 2022 pharmacy contracts will expire October 24, 2022, rather than the end of the year. This will only further reduce the pharmacy network for TRICARE patients and their families, and may force beneficiaries to change pharmacies at a time when many receive annual vaccinations.

Pharmacists continue to be one of the most accessible health care providers in the United States. Over 90 percent of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy, and 76.5 percent of pharmacies in rural areas are independent community pharmacies. As you know, in addition to dispensing medications and vaccines, community pharmacies provide services that lead to better health outcomes, lower overall administrative fees, and valuable in-person consultations with a healthcare provider.

To ensure TRICARE beneficiaries maintain access to local pharmacies, we respectfully request answers to the following questions.

1. How is DHA monitoring current and future retail pharmacy participation in the TRICARE Pharmacy program?
2. If future in-network pharmacy participation decreases, what steps will DHA take to ensure adequate access to in-person pharmacy services for TRICARE beneficiaries?
3. Terminating the 2022 pharmacy contracts two months ahead of schedule will likely lead to a disruption of care for TRICARE beneficiaries. What reasons has Express Scripts given DHA for terminating the 2022 contracts early? Please outline what oversight DHA has over Express Scripts, as well as what authority DHA has given Express Scripts to make these contract changes.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Due to the patient access and safety concerns expressed above, we look forward to receiving your response and working with you to

ensure TRICARE beneficiaries continue to receive the utmost care from trusted, local health care professionals.

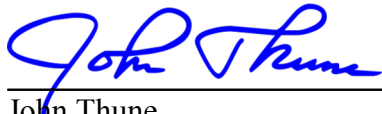
Sincerely,



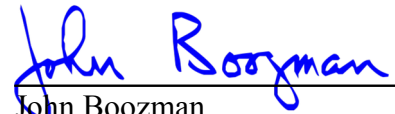
Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



John Thune
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



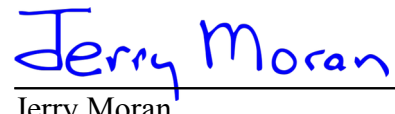
Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Cynthia M. Lummis
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator

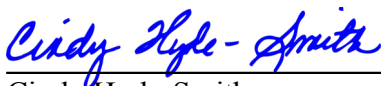



Tommy Tuberville
United States Senator



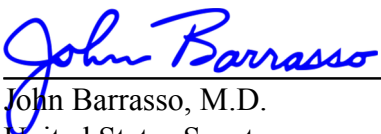
Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Bill Hagerty
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator


Marsha Blackburn
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M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
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Roger Marshall, M.D.
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Mike Braun
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United States Senator


Deb Fischer
United States Senator



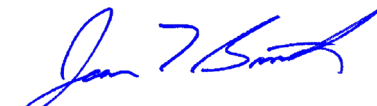
Mike Rogers
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Mike Bost
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Cathy McMorris Rodgers
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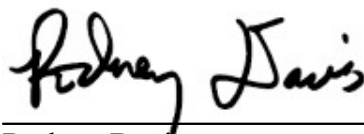
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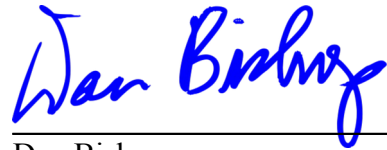
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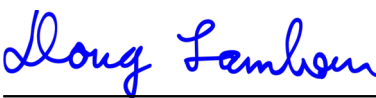
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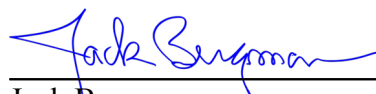
Garret Graves
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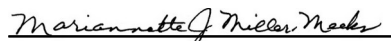
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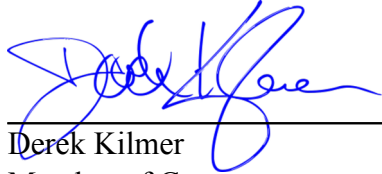
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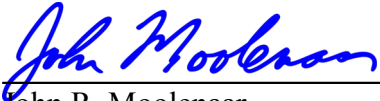
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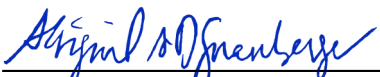
David P. Joyce
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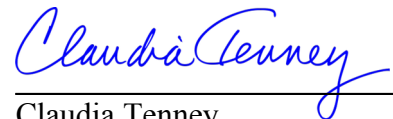
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Abigail Davis Spanberger
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