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**Tony Cárdenas**  
**Congress of the United States**  
**29th District, California**

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When It Comes To American's Veterans California Is Not Arizona And It Should Never Get That Way

Dear Veterans of the 29<sup>th</sup> District,

I want to reconnect and fill you in about the work my staff and I have been doing in Washington and in the Valley to help our Veterans. When I was first elected to Congress, I promptly met with the local Veterans Administration (VA) to begin a strong working relationship so that, together, we could assist the Veterans of our community. I assured her that my office would be more than willing to help our communities whether it is through legislative action in Washington or delivering exemplary constituent services in California.

In May when the horrible news reports came to light about the egregious mistakes made at VA facilities in Arizona, I immediately met with the local VA Director again. I made sure that she knew that a fully functioning VA was extremely important to my constituents and that I would help in any way that I could to ensure that she has the necessary resources to provide our Veterans with the care they deserve.

Once I got back to Washington, my colleagues and I voted to pass legislation to help solve many of the issues that plagued the Arizona VA. The bill will set aside \$10 billion for a pilot program that reimburses private care for Veterans who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility or experience long wait times at their local VA. It allocated \$5 billion for the VA to hire more doctors and nurses and upgrade medical facilities. It also gives the VA permission to enter into 27 major medical facility leases across the country.

To make sure the best people are working for our Veterans, at as highly effective a rate as possible, this legislation gives the VA Secretary the ability to quickly dismiss or demote senior executive employees for misconduct, poor performance and it forbids the VA from attaching bonus payments to wait time goals. The President signed the bill into law and I will monitor its implementation to ensure care and services get to our Veterans as quickly as practicable.

Recently, I followed up with another face to face meeting with the local VA Director. We met to discuss how the local VA is implementing new changes and reforms. The Director assured me that the local VA is going to work diligently to implement the new changes. She also assured me of her dedication to communicating with the local Veterans through town halls with Veterans Service Organizations, ensuring that Veterans' best know how to utilize the VA for help.

I am also working on legislation that will give businesses better incentives to hire our Veterans. The massive gap between veteran and civilian unemployment rates is unacceptable to me. All American businesses should extend special effort to hire those who have sacrificed so much for our county. The Honoring the Hiring of Heroes Act will create an nationally recognized award inside the Department of Labor for businesses both big and small that do an exemplary jobs of hiring and promoting Veterans. I hope this public recognition will have enough prestige to incentivize businesses to better dedicate themselves to hiring Veterans.

As I continue work to serve veterans like you please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or inquires. My San Fernando staff can be reached at (818) 504-0090 and my District of Columbia staff can be reached at (202) 225-6131.

If you use Twitter, please follow @RepCardenas to keep up with everything I'm doing in Washington and in the Valley.

Sincerely,

  
TONY CÁRDENAS  
Member of Congress